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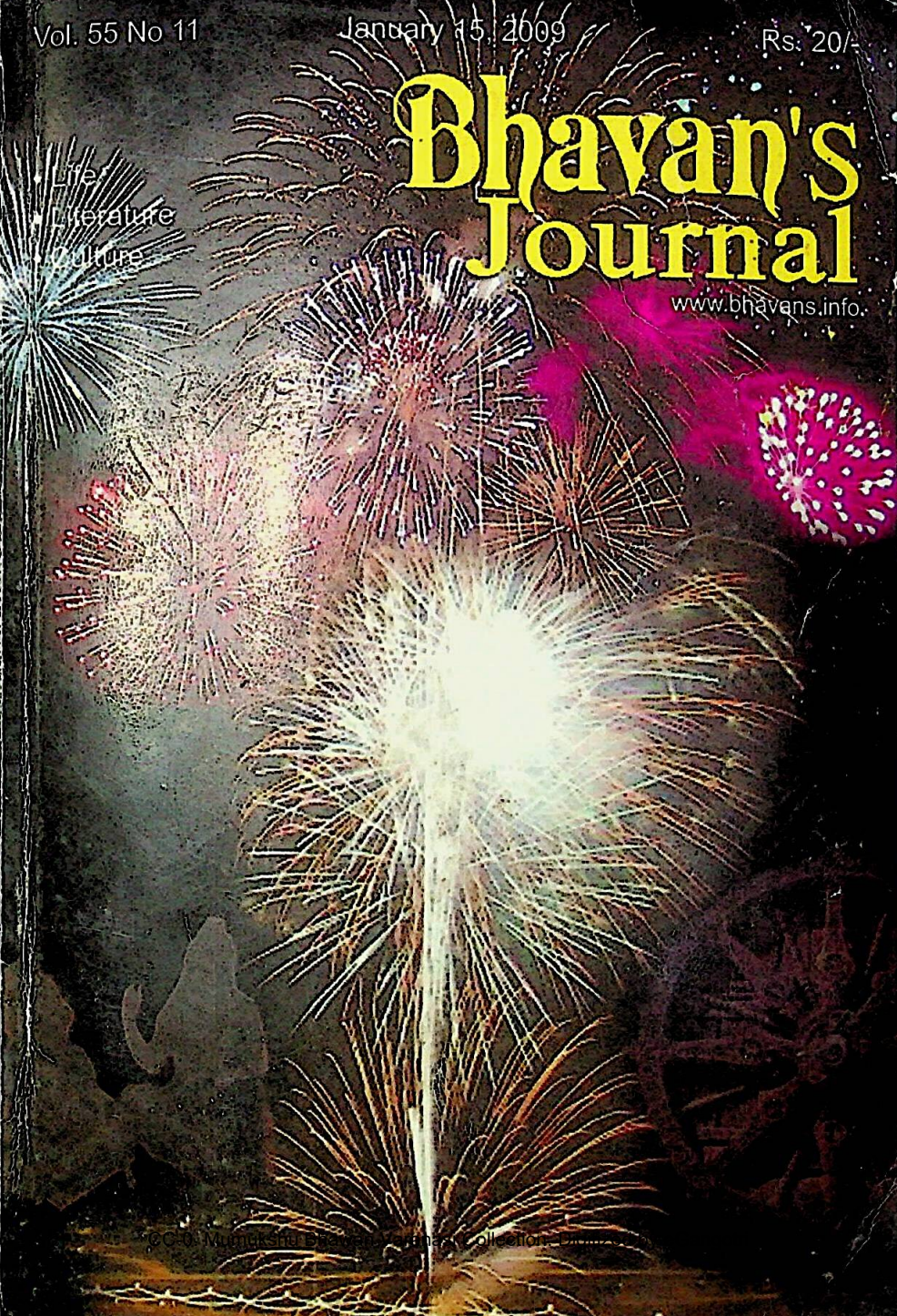
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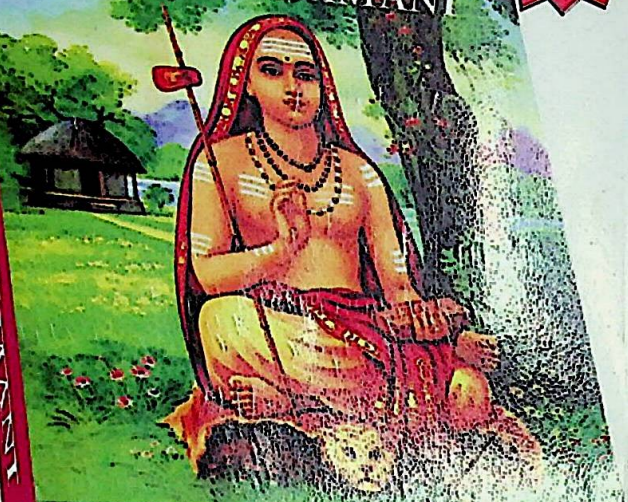
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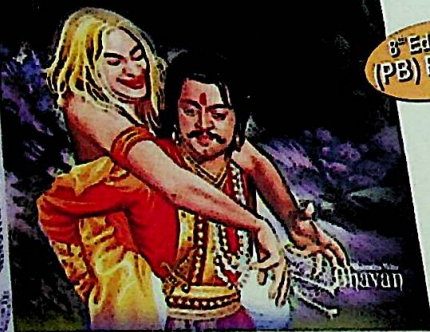
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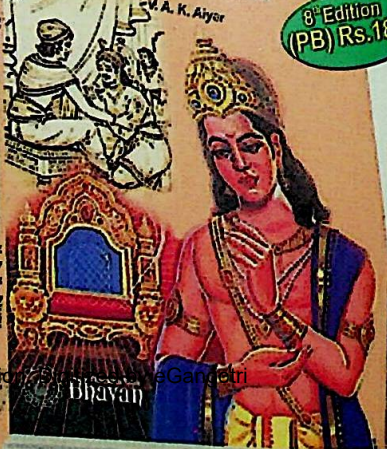


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आ नो भद्राः क्रतवो यन्तु विश्वतः ।

aa no bhadraah kratavo yantu vishvatah

Let noble thoughts come to us from every side -Rigveda, 1-89-I



Holy

न हि वैरेण वैराणि शाम्यन्तीह कदाचन ।

अवैरेण च शाम्यन्ति एष धर्मः सनातनः ॥

*na hi vairena vairaani shaamyanteeha kadaachna
avairena cha shaamyanti esha dharmah sanaatanah*

Never do enmities cease by hating in this world, but hatred ceases by love. This is the eternal law.

— *Dhammapada-1-5-Buddhavachan*

..... And Wise

Hating people is like burning down your own house to get rid of a rat.

— *Harry Emrson Fosdick*

January 15, 2009

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**We Wish All Our Readers
A Very Happy And
Prosperous New Year**

Editorial and Administrative Office

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,

Kulapati K.M. Munshi Marg, Chowpatty, Mumbai-400 007.

Phones 2363 1261/2363 4462. Fax: 022-2363 0058

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FLASH BACK

Bhavan's Journal, Fifty years ago

**From the pages of Bhavan's
Journal, January 11, 1959**

The Galilean Conquers

Swami Vivekananda

God listened to Sri Ramakrishna's prayers; so I hurried to Dakshineswar and insisted on his making the appeal on behalf of my starving family. He said, 'My boy, I can't make such demands. But why don't you go and ask the Mother yourself? All your sufferings are due to your disregard of Her.' I went for the third time, but on entering the temple a terrible shame overpowered me. I came to him and said, 'Sir, it is you who has cast a charm over my mind and made me forgetful. Now please grant me the boon that my people at home may no longer suffer poverty.' At last he said, 'All right, your people at home will never be in want of plain food and clothing.' From that day onward, a new life began for Naren who later got the name of Vivekananda by virtue of his extremely critical attitude towards all faiths. He now knew and believed in his faith which he proclaimed to the world. "The only God in whom I believe, is the sum total of all souls, and above all, I believe on my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races..."

The Galilean had conquered.

How to Prevent Wars

Dr. A. C. Bose

The Vedas contemplate peace and harmony between man and nature, between the individual soul and the Cosmic Spirit. The Atharva Veda reproduces this great hymn. It has another hymn on *sam-jnanam*, or concord, which extends the sphere of social union. And there we get an answer to the question asked above. It says:

Let us have concord with our own people, and concord with people who are strangers;

You Two, Asvins! grant that we and the strangers have concord within us here.

May we have unity of minds, unity of purposes; let us not fight against the Divine Spirit within us.

Let not the din of battle arise, with large numbers slain, nor the arrows of the War-God fall with the coming of day.

Restore Spiritual Values If We Wish to Live

C. Rajagopalachari

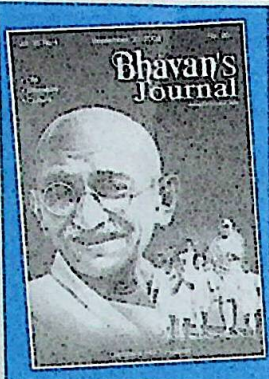
The Council of the Federation of American Scientists has recently found that the stock-piles of nuclear bombs in the possession of nuclear powers are now sufficient to wipe out the entire human race and that there is no likelihood of any defence being discovered against massive atomic attack. The process of experimentation in the making and improving of these nuclear weapons has led to a poisoning of the whole world along with its future children, even if no war breaks out and we are saved from atomic battles. In our present position, we must restore the spiritual values. The young should be brought up to accept value other than material. Religions should be cleared of all rigidity which does not suit the condition produced by two centuries of mutual attacks, over and above the general impact of reason on all religions. Religion should be made gentle and easy like what a mother is to her children.

The Japan I Saw

Lilavati Munshi

Japan has made a rapid all-round progress in industry after the war. There is courtesy and correctness in the Japanese manners.

In Japan, Sunday is not a holiday for every one. Each one can choose a day in the week on which day he can close his shop and observe the holiday. The Japanese people are very hard-working and clean. They are very thorough and punctual to the minute. The servants are mostly women. No beggars are seen in Japan. ■



Reader.com

Relevance of the Mahatma

Sir,-Apropos the editorial "Missing The Mahatma" (BJ: September, 30), the recent incidents confirm your observation that values and ideals espoused by the Mahatma, and which he observed and fought for, seem to have vanished from the Indian psyche and society. Mahatma's statues outnumber his real followers pan India, and even those who remember him on October 2, do so as an act of ritualistic homage in order to promote their political fortunes, rather than to propagate his legacy. Truth, the cardinal principle of Mahatma's philosophy, has vanished from all spheres of public life and activity and corruption is the king,

everywhere.

As the edit. has very rightly put it, unless we somehow return to the values dear to the Mahatma—honesty, ahimsa, and human dignity—and develop tolerance and mutual respect for each other's way of life, the credibility of our multi-ethnic, multi-cultural secular democratic republic is itself in danger. We, the people, must frustrate the diabolical designs of those who want to keep us apart just for the sake of gaining and retaining political power.

—*Dr. R.K.Malhotra,*
New Delhi

BJ Has Grown Up

Sir,-Hats off to you for the valuable quotes of Gandhiji on Press (BJ, Sept. 30, 2008).

Commercial motives have overtaken the other readables in print media; and the visual media. "There is hardly a proportion between news/visuals with commercials". Another informative article in the issue is on, 'How Independent is India' by Girish Vaithilingan. All show B.J. has grown up.

—C. Ramankutty,
Kongad

Miracles – Diwali Issue

Sir,- First, define a miracle. I light a match. The savage calls it a miracle. I fly in a plane, he calls it a miracle. But do they happen? The entire life, creation are miracles. Shri K. M. Munshi introduced me to Sathya Sai Baba via Kasturi in 1965. The Baba told Kasturi that if a man writes on a bus ticket, he will reply to each letter. I took a bus ticket and scribbled, "Baba, why this *musibat*?" I posted and it reached the Baba, who laughingly gave it to an astonished Kasturi.

While walking on the Marine Drive in Mumbai

one evening, thinking of a point and asking the Baba mentally, a man waves to me opposite Nataraj Hotel then and tells me to purchase a book. I do and to my astonishment, it answers my questions.

The third instance happened last month. A girl asked whether the Bhagavan could give her a present on her birthday on October 6. I scribbled and asked her to post. In two days, a Bangalore family brought a present to her.

—D. Buxey,
Mumbai

Orchid Tree

Sir,-The write up on the orchid tree (BJ Nov.15,) was interesting. We have many orchid plants in our garden and we never had the knowledge about their medicinal use. Thanks for providing us with such valuable information.

— Charu Shah,
Surendranagar

Lacking Values

Sir,-The article, "Education is Business, Big and Thriving" by

Dr. B. M. Hegde (BJ, Nov. 15, 2008) is interesting. It has made a distinction between literacy and education. Education was regarded as a noble profession practised by rishis and saints for the well-being of society. Teachers were referred to as Acharyas who imparted knowledge, wisdom and skill to students (Sishyas) under Gurukula system.

The purpose of education underwent a transformation to the extent that today it is merely a tool to earn a living or a means to acquire wealth and assets for living a comfortable life. As the purpose has changed, the mode of extending the education also has changed. Education in today's society is a saleable commodity/service which is offered at a price. The price varies depending on the type and field of education.

Higher educational institutions are no longer temples of knowledge. They are merely factories churning out skilled labourers and breeding

ground for anti-social elements including prospective politicians. When Gandhiji gave a clarion call to students to participate in the struggle for freedom, many joined the movement to save India from the shackles of slavery. But today's student leaders thrive by propagating casteism, regionalism and religion to fulfill their aspirations to garner the vote bank and occupy the seat of power.

—C. K. Narayana,
Tiruchi (Tamil Nadu)

Is There a True Religion?

Sir, -I wish to congratulate Dr. Amul Shah for his thought-provoking article on the above subject (BJ, Oct. 31, 2008) which should be incorporated in the textbooks prescribed for higher secondary educational courses so that the younger generations could follow the correct path on religious matters.

The authorities should amend the Constitution to declare that "All the Religions are equal" and hence should be treated as

members of a single religion known as "Indian Religion".

I had taken up this matter with the Constitution Review Committee in 2000 with a suggestion to Indianise all the laws enacted under the Constitution replacing various religious laws existed hitherto so that any aggrieved client could get equal status and right under the Constitution as "Indians".

The unfortunate situation we notice today is that in India there is no Indian but only when one goes out of India, he or she becomes Indian!

—A.

Narayanan,
Chennai

Children's Education

Sir,—"Gandhiji and Education" by Dr. Devender Kawday and Prof. Dini Menon (BJ, Nov.15, 2008) is enlightening. It is worth reading to understand the basis on which the educational system needs to be modified. In my opinion the Centre should take up the responsibility of providing

the basic principles to the States, on which the educational programmes need to be worked out. There are many scholars like the authors of the above referred article, who can chalk out what should be taught to the children, to build the character of the students so that they can shoulder the responsibility of acquiring knowledge in the higher standards and when they go to colleges.

Every educated person agrees with the Mahatma's views on education, but no Minister or educationist wants to implement the ideas in practice. What is the use of economic progress without responsible citizens?

— **Dr. M. C. Subbaramu,**
Mysore

Law for All

Sir,—The article, "Contempt Law and Minister", by Justice Shri K. P. Radhakrishna Menon (B.J, Nov.15) is educative and useful to students. The Supreme Court's resolution, as cited by the

author, that "Judges either in their official or personal capacity, should not behave or conduct themselves in a manner that might erode people's faith in the impartiality of the judiciary", demonstrates the highest values and principles of our judiciary.

While stressing on the need for discipline, judicial restraint and use of proper language, the Supreme Court, in the case of A. M. Mathur vs Pramod Kumar Gupta (1990) 2 SCC 533: (AIR 1990 SC 1737 at page 1741), *inter alia*, buttressed the above resolution with the observation that, "Judicial restraint and discipline are necessary to the orderly administration of justice as they are to the effectiveness of the army". The Judge's Bench is a seat of power. Judges have power to make binding decisions, their decisions legitimate the use of power by other officials. But they cannot misuse their authority by intemperate comments, undignified banter or scathing criticism of counsel, parties or

witnesses.

– S. Krishnamurthy,
Bangalore

Vibrancy of US Democracy

Sir,-The United States has shown again its ability and capability to create history.

The global super power has shown to the world that its democracy is vibrant with the election of Barrack Hussein Obama as it's the 45th President.

Obama is not one of the great leaders who projected himself as the new spirit of a multi-cultural and cross-generational dynamic leader with appeal to the old and new generations alike with his multi-cultural candidacy.

This decision of the US citizens is set to change the course of history globally and a lesson to other democracies that it is the personality with character, dynamism, foresight, vision and mission that can change the fate of the country.

– Prof. O. S. Reddi,
Hyderabad ■



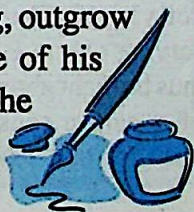
Kulapativani Concept of Dharma

Dharma, synonym of *Rita* in its primary sense, was the Cosmic Order which upheld the whole creation. Being one and indivisible, it is operated upon all planes, material, social, moral and spiritual, and everything that was created evolved according to its laws.

In its secondary sense, Dharma meant the pursuit of the Highest Good by a man trying to live in conformity with the Cosmic Order.

Dharma took its stand on the fact that man was neither the creature nor the victim of forces, either physical or supra-physical. He was certainly not the creature of environments, as held by some modern social philosophers. He was the meeting point of hereditary and environmental forces as well as of moral and spiritual forces operating through a series of lives.

By pursuing Dharma, therefore, he could operate the forces of the Cosmic Order, and by so doing, outgrow his limitations as well as alter the course of his present and future lives, as also change the shape of his social and material environment. ■



Bhavan's Essay

Avowal of A New Belief System

Pachu Menon

The secular credentials of the country seem to be taking a severe reproach with a spate of attacks on 'minorities' holding the headlines in recent times. Communal tensions between the Hindus and Muslims have been a regular feature in the past few decades, tearing apart a nation already severed to accommodate the wishes of a few leaders on either side of the border with myopic views.

How else could one explain the partition blues that created Pakistan from an *Akhand Bharat* that today is being seen as the hot-bed of all international terrorist activities? The adamancy in carving out an Islamic state has thus brought about the formation of a nation sans any political stability that has reeled – and

succumbed – to the tyranny of a succession of imbecile despots.

A belief that India is a *Hindu Rashtra* needs to be understood in its correct perspective. There couldn't be a bigger blunder than fostering a feeling that with the partition of 1947, the country belongs to the Hindus, with the Muslims having settled for Pakistan. What about the Hindus and Muslims who preferred to stay back in the newly-formed territories? Are they to be treated as pariahs outcasts? At least, then our country has had the magnanimity of treating followers of all other religions at par and extending to them the privileges of a bona fide citizen of the country. Could this be said of our neighbour?

Secularity in the country stems from the conviction that a

country of a majority of the Hindus holds practitioners of other faiths in equal reverence. This in turn has given birth to the concept of addressing the other existing faction as *minorities*. Maintaining this unique attribute, the nation has, in all ways, strived to protect and safeguard the interests of the so-called minorities. They, in turn, remaining well within their limits were – and are supposed – to lead a fruitful and peaceful existence.

Reservations and other perks that sought to uplift the cause of these minority communities have, however, not gone down well with the masses, with successive governments bearing the brunt of their critical attacks for the sheer negligence of the

majority in favour of placating a few minority communities.

It would be wise and in the general interest of society to keep politics and religion apart. But alas, it can never be so! Politicians are always in search of an issue; a burning issue that has a relevance to their emergence in the national arena of political superstardom. Playing on the religious sentiments of the people, politicians have been able to get away with the worst of follies.

Religion continues to be seen as the most potent weapon in the hands of a zealot to draw the populace into a whirlpool of fanatic clamour of communal discord. When it comes to matters of one's faith and belief,

Reservations and other perks that sought to uplift the cause of these minority communities have, however, not gone down well with the masses, with successive governments bearing the brunt of their critical attacks for the sheer negligence of the majority in favour of placating a few minority communities.

even an unintended pun could be given shades of grey, prompting uproars of religious heresy or blasphemy.

History bears testimonial evidence of scores of foreign marauders invading the country and enslaving the inhabitants using these psychological manoeuvres.

Kandhamal in Orissa, has been lately at the epicentre of communal clashes between the Hindus and the Christians, with the latter alleging atrocities committed on them ranging from arson, loot, rape and brutal murder. The media has spared no efforts to ensure that the ongoing clash is seen as a religious conflict, with the Hindu mobs shown butchering the Christians.

Sandeep Sahu, an Orissa-based journalist, with the BBC, writes in the *Indian Express* that "the present round of communal conflagration in Kandhamal is an offshoot of long simmering ethnic divides rather than religious ones."

"With the majority *Kandha* tribe ranged against the minority

scheduled caste *Panas*, the quarrel between the two is seen in religious terms as the majority of Kandhas are Hindus and likewise the majority of Panas are Christians. They are at war not because of their religious persuasion, but over the benefits of reservation. As per the provisions of the Constitution, Scheduled Castes, unlike Scheduled Tribes, stand to lose their right to reservation once they convert to Christianity. It is the reluctance of the Pana converts to Christianity to let go of the benefits of reservation that has pitted them against the Kandhas."

"It was the campaign launched by Christian leaders to accord tribal status to Panas that raised the hackles of the Kandhas, who feel that the Pana Christians, through the benefits of modern education through missionary schools and reservation, are getting the best of both the worlds. From a mere 2 per cent in the 1961 census, the percentage of Christians in the total population of the district

reaching 18.19 per cent by 2001 would lay bare the claim that the growth of Christian population in Kandhamal is 'organic'. This is what provided the ammunition for the Hindutva brigade to whip up communal passions."

The Constitution of India, under Article 25, gives every citizen the right to profess and propagate his/her religion. Proponents of various religious orders have incessantly quoted their founder's learned words, extolling them to go out into the world and preach about their religion. "You must go out to preach your religion, preach it to every nation under the sun," so said Swami Vivekananda.

With phrases like, "May the active be glorifying God arousing all," and "May I speak these blissful words to my own people and the foreigner," even the Holy Vedas make very explicit mentions of religious preaching and propagation.

Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, often said, "For this purpose I was born and to spread this religion God

appointed me." The Buddha's compassionate words to his brethren, "Go into all lands and preach this gospel. Tell them that the poor and lowly, the rich and high are one" emphasise the need for any religion to spread and take roots.

Spreading faith should never be viewed as a crime. History teaches us that India has 'played host' to various religions which in the course of time spread to the other parts of the world.

Hinduism spread to Malay Peninsula, Cambodia, Indonesia and Borneo, besides the Indian subcontinent. Buddhism started building an envious following in China, Korea, Thailand, Myanmar, Tibet, Sri Lanka, Japan, Vietnam and other eastern countries. Christianity started taking firm roots in the whole of Europe and America when it systematically spread from Israel. Islam, the other world religion today, made rapid strides from Arabia to the other parts of Asia and Africa.

Religious conversion is the adoption of a new religious

Spreading faith should never be viewed as a crime.

History teaches us that India has 'played host' to various religions which in the course of time spread to the other parts of the world.

identity, or a change from one religious identity to another. Christianity and Islam are major religions which accentuate the desirability of conversion.

The Hindus, as a reaction to perceived and actual threat of evangelisation and conversion activities and other major religions, are opposed to conversions from one religion to any other per se. Reconversion among people who were formerly Hindus has picked up pace with the growth of Hindu revivalist movements. National organisations like, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) actively facilitate such reconversions. Since conversions out of Hinduism were never

considered valid, welcoming the prodigals into the fold once again is well accepted within the Hindu society.

The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights defines religious conversion as a human right. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights drafted by the United Nation's Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) specifies that, "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief of his choice. No one shall be subject to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice."

This also includes the right to replace one's current religion or belief with another or to adopt atheistic views. Coercion would also mean the use of threat of physical force or penal sanctions to compel believers or non-believers to adhere to their religious beliefs and congregations to recant their religion or belief or to convert.

Normally speaking, all humans have the right to *freedom of religion, freedom of association* and the *freedom of speech*. The right to have religious beliefs/or to change them, to form religious organisations for the purpose of worship and for promoting their cause and the right to speak to others about their convictions with the purpose of influencing the others needs to be appreciated in the right sense.

But distorting facts and features to suit their cause, the genesis of the present crisis, seems to have been laid long before by a discerned few. They have been aptly termed as religious fanatics and zealots who appear to have given themselves the onerous task of converting the whole world to their way of thinking.

More often than not, it has been the poor and the illiterate who have been targeted. Inducing people to change their religion using the authority of the education system or easy access to healthcare and similar benefits should always be seen in poor

light. Trying to impose one's views on a captive audience where the listeners have no choice but to be present and offering money and other gratifications to persuade people to change religion is to be categorised as improper proselytising.

The sequence of attacks on churches and on Christians which has taken the country by storm has rarely had a parallel. With the spotlight so far having been on the *pseudo-jihadic* ventures of a largely mislead and misguided Islamic youth who dared to go to the extremes in pursuance of their cause, rocking the motherland with a series of well-planned and well-timed bomb blasts, one is yet to come to terms with the logic behind the current 'hate philosophy' between the Hindus and Christians.

What has warranted an unprecedented show of strength and unity by various groups and organisations who profess to safeguard the *Hindu Dharma* is definitely a matter of

consternation. This lends credence to the fact that in spite of Hinduism preaching the ideology of tolerance towards all other religions, the practitioners of the faith have a very intolerant attitude towards others of various caste and creed.

Various splinter groups claiming to safeguard the interests of the Hindus appear to do so, politically motivated. The Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) has been banned for its violent and anti-national leanings. How has the *Sangh Parivar* with its various wings like the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* and the *Bajrang Dal* avoided castigation and never been censured for their militant outlook?

In fact, organisations which proclaim themselves the keepers of the nation's faith are nothing but militant groups who have been responsible for spreading communal hatred and unrest. The 'Gujarat Holocaust' – if it could be called that – is a vivid example of the 'follow the sheep' syndrome which saw human

beings returning to the prehistoric ages, with intelligence forfeited for pure barbarism.

Christian missionaries working for the welfare and betterment of the tribals and downtrodden have invited the ire of the diehard Hindu fanatics. Untouchability, the scourge of the civilised world, has alienated members from the same community which has been responsible for these outcasts embracing another faith, taking solace in comforts of the new found identity. Large scale conversion to Christianity of fishermen in Tamil Nadu some years ago was an eye-opener.

Allowing every individual the freedom of practising one's faith without any bias towards caste or creed should form the one-point agenda of every religion-conscious Hindu. However, as per justice Wadhwa Commission report, the Hindu population grew by 2.52 per cent over the decade, whereas the Christian population in the same period

rose by 0.008 per cent only.

The Constitution of India provides ample safeguards against forceful and fraudulent conversions with several states having passed legislations aiming at preventing conversion through force, fraud and inducement. *However, it would be interesting to note that in the past six decades of independent India's history, a case of forced or fraudulent conversion is yet to be proved/prosecuted.*

A theologian friend, an editor of a bold national weekly, who never likes to mince words says, "The 'conversion' issue is a ploy! The agenda is something else and well planned. Catholic church, and even some Protestant churches, have made it public and official that they are against conversions of any kind. But there are some pastors working independently who are out for increasing the number of their followers. Catholic church never approves of their methods or attitude. The question is, when there is a law to handle such issues and punish such offenders,

why should activists take law in their hands, burn down houses and places of worship, kill the innocent, rape even the nuns....? In what way are they different from the 'Islamic terrorists'? And the silence of the right-thinking people is again dangerous...."

The Christian contribution to nation building in India is above criticism. It is claimed that the funds received by the Christian organisations are reported to the Home Ministry under FCRA, with 25 per cent of it being visible in the social sector in India. A majority of the social services in the country are run by Christian groups. They are credited with establishing and managing thousands of educational institutions in the country. In India, annually over fifteen million students go through the portals of Christian institutions.

Schools, colleges, hospitals, orphanages, destitute homes, and leprosy and HIV/AIDS rehabilitation centers, old age homes, counseling centres

Their social manifesto is a never ending list of humanitarian endeavours.

I am a Hindu and am very proud of my religious affiliations. My head, however, hangs in shame at the atrocities carried out in the name of protecting the Hindus and their ideologies by organisations whose political affiliations outscore all other considerations. No sane Hindu will ever bray for the blood of a fellow being – in fact no religion teaches that!

In spite of the Maoists claiming responsibility for the killing of Swami Lakshmanananda Saraswati, the logic behind the slaughter of Christians in Orissa remains a mystery.

Equating the activists of various Hindu groups to thugs and goons in a riotous rampage in the country disturbs the soul of every well-meaning Hindu.

It would be blasphemous to expect the birth of another Hitler who would want to prove the supremacy of the Aryan race beyond any reasonable doubt and

indulge in the persecution of Jews by devising ways and means to 'purge' them in the most inhuman ways possible.

If all religions could be understood as nothing but different means to reach that Supreme Being, the world would be a better place to live in. If there could be acrimonious difference of opinion in the practising of a particular faith among its followers, a serious discord over conversions being seen as sacrilegious is not unusual.

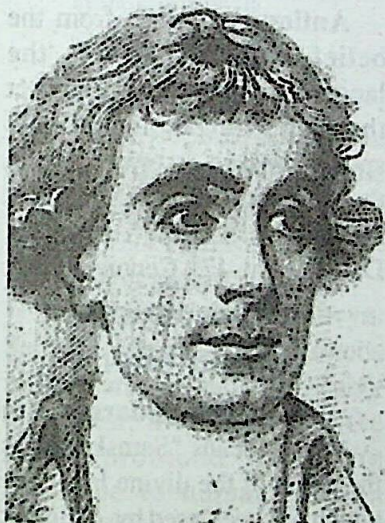
A school of thought that adherents of other religions in India are basically Hindus who have converted centuries ago in the wake of the rule of various foreign invaders is fast gaining prominence.

Respecting each other's religious sentiments, living in co-existence should be the new mantra and those preaching it should be considered the messiahs of a world torn by hatred and mistrust. We can only fervently pray for the dawn of that new era! ■

Sanskrit — Its Antiquity, Richness and Uniqueness

B. M. N. Murthy

Sir William Jones [1746-94], a multi-linguist with knowledge of English, Spanish, French, Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Arabic came to India in 1783 at the instance of the British Government to join the Supreme Court of Judicature at



Sir William Jones

Fort Williams, Calcutta. He founded the Asiatic Society in 1784.

During his stay in India for over ten years, he learnt Sanskrit to such an extent as to publish an English translation of Kalidasa's 'Shakuntalam' in 1789.

This work drew applause from contemporary English poets like Shelley, Byron, Coleridge etc. Under the Asiatic Society, he delivered eleven lectures.

In one of his lectures, dealing with the pre-eminence of Sanskrit, he observed.

"The Sanskrit language, whatever may be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure, more perfect than Greek and more copious than Latin and more exquisitely refined than either".

It is unfortunate that there is now a feeling among a section of the general public that Sanskrit is complicated, its grammar extremely difficult to understand and its utility restricted to the recitation of Vedic Mantras during religious ceremonies and the language cannot be spoken.

Nothing is farther from truth. It should be noted that Sanskrit is not merely a language but it represents the totality of Hindu culture right from Kashmir to Kanyakumari

This becomes evident with a slight acquaintance of the language. Sanskrit is the one common national inheritance of India.

The South and the North, the East and the West, have equally contributed to it. No part of India can claim it as its exclusive possession. When we talk of our national genius being unity in diversity, of the fundamental oneness etc, what we mean is the dominance of Sanskrit which overrides regional differences and linguistic peculiarities and achieves a true national character in our thought and emotions. The

fact that the Vedic Mantras that we recite, the scriptures that we read like the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavadgita etc remain exactly the same throughout the length and breadth of the country for the past thousands of years is sufficient proof that Sanskrit is the thread that has bound all of us together.

It is truly said that one who knows Sanskrit is a better Indian for he is in a position to appreciate what every part of India has contributed to it.

Antiquity: Apart from the belief that Sanskrit is the language of the Gods, the fact that even our ancient Rishis spoke Sanskrit is evident from the following statement of Poet Dandin in his 'Kavya Darshanam': [7th Century Poet]

संस्कृतं नाम दैवीवाक्
अन्वाख्याता महर्षिभिः ।

-Kavyadarshanam
which means "Samskritam is the name of the divine language which has been used by our great Sages".

The antiquity of Sanskrit can be traced back to the days of the Ramayana, recognised as the Adi Kavya in Sanskrit literature.

There is reference to Sanskrit as a spoken language in the Sundara Kandam of the Ramayana. When Hanuman is about to meet Sita in the Ashokavanam, he is in a dilemma as to the language in which he should address her. Maharshi Valmiki says:

यदि वाचं प्रदास्यामि
द्विजातिरिव संस्कृताम्।
रावणं मन्यमाना मां
सीता भीता भविष्यति॥

which means "In case I [Hanuman] speak to Sita in Sanskrit, the language of the people, she could be frightened thinking that I am Ravana in the garb of a monkey"

Ramayana, the Adikavya: Sanskrit stands second to none in its literature and is probably the oldest, the richest and the most profound literature available to humanity even today—both in quality and quantity.

Ever since Ramayana was written thousands of years back by Maharshi Valmiki, no product of Sanskrit literature enjoys greater popularity than Sanskrit even today. When asked about the period of its validity and its importance to humanity, Lord Brahma says in the Ramayana:

यावत् स्थास्यन्ति गिरयः
सरितश्च महीतले।
तावत् रामायणकथा
लोकेषु प्रचरिष्यति॥

-Balakanda 2-37

meaning "As long as mountain ranges stand and rivers flow on earth, so long will the story of Ramayana remain on the lips of men".

No other poet in the entire world literature has influenced the thought and culture of a nation as the Ramayana has done. It is called 'Adi Kavya' not only from the point of view of its antiquity, but also from the point of its pre-eminent position in literature.

Mahabharata: The other equally popular ornate epic in Sanskrit is Mahabharata which

consists of over one lakh *shlokas*, 8 times as big as '*Iliad*' and '*Odyssey*' put together. It is by far the longest poem known to the literary world.

The versatility and the nobility of subjects dealt within Mahabharata are so great that it has assumed almost the importance of a treatise on Dharma Shastra and has been recognised as the Fifth Veda.

Of the many treasures that Mahabharata contains, nothing is more sublime and preferred than the Bhagavad Gita. While Mahabharata, with its one lakh *shlokas*, has the distinction of being the world's largest epic, the Bhagavad Gita containing just 700 *shlokas* is acclaimed as the world's shortest scripture and humanity's Song Celestial. It enjoys the status of an Upanishad.

Grammar: In Sanskrit, grammar, called Vyakarana, has always been given the pride of place. In fact, it is considered to be one of the six limbs of the Vedas and without the study of Sanskrit grammar no Vedic

knowledge becomes complete.

The credit for this systematic compilation of a treatise goes to Maharshi Panini [7th Century B.C]. He authored the well-known "Ashtadhyayi", the first and the foremost treatise on Sanskrit Grammar.

Ashtadhyayi consists of about 4,000 Sutras or Aphorisms on which the Sanskrit language is built. There exists a close parallel between Panini's Ashtadhyayi and Euclid's Geometry. Just as Euclid in his 'Elements' starts with a few definitions, axioms and postulates and then goes on building theorem after theorem, similarly Panini has squeezed and distilled his entire thought on grammar and put them in the form of these 4,000 Sutras.

The grammar is so elaborate, accurate and comprehensive that Sanskrit Grammar has become an independent subject for study and learning, whereas it is just a part of literature in any other language.

Sanskrit as Computer Language: After examining all the available facilities in almost

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all the European languages, Western Computer Scientists came to the conclusion that Panini's 'Ashtadhyayi' is the ideal computer language. In fact, *The Forbes Magazine*, America in one of its issues in 1987 reported that Sanskrit is the most suitable language for computerisation.

Oxford Recognition: The opening sentence in the prospectus to Sanskrit studies at Oxford University reads "Sanskrit is the way to Indian civilisation and it is in this spirit that Sanskrit is taught at

Oxford"

Amarakosha [Sanskrit Dictionary in verse]: Sanskrit has a unique dictionary in the form of verses [*Shlokas*] which are classified subject-wise. This rare feat of literary merit and excellence is the composition of a Jain poet by name Amarasimha who lived in the 5th century A.D.

For example, in a chapter called 'Varivarga' [Vari means water in Sanskrit], all the words pertaining to river, ocean, streams, reservoirs, tanks etc are grouped together and brought under this chapter with all their synonyms.

Similarly, in the Natyavarga, all the words pertaining to dance, drama, theatre, music, musical instruments etc are grouped and dealt with in this chapter.

Amarakosha has three 'Kandas' or divisions and it is easy to commit to memory all the three of them.

Shabdakalpadruma: This is a Sanskrit literary encyclopaedia of Johnsonian magnitude [about 7,000 pages] compiled about 150

years back by a great Sanskrit poet by name Raja Radhakanta Deb, who was a contemporary of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He compiled this voluminous Sanskrit lexicon with a view to rehabilitating Sanskrit to its pristine glory in his own country and to facilitate the study of this ancient and venerable language in Europe.

He took 36 years to complete the job. It comprises of seven volumes, each running to about 1,000 pages.

In 1854, the King of Denmark awarded a royal medal to Radhakanta for his outstanding work and for promoting Sanskrit literature in foreign countries. In appreciation of his valuable work, Queen Victoria conferred on Raja Radhakanta a distinguished mark of Royal favour by a splendid gold medal.

Etymology: Sanskrit is a perennial river of knowledge and practical wisdom catering to a variety of needs in a changing society.

This has been possible since Sanskrit has a wonderful

vocabulary of words. Sanskrit etymology which is the study and sense development of words, is probably the richest among world languages. It has more than 2000 verbal roots—the highest among the world's languages- and each of the verbs gives rise to hundreds of derivatives.

Chitra Kavya: There is a special type of literary composition called 'Chitra Kavya'. Words are chosen which have different meanings. [It is peculiarity of Sanskrit that the same word has different meanings, depending on the context].

Chitra Kavya chooses such words having different meanings and by a judicious use of words and an intelligent splitting of the compound words makes this composition possible. If the word gives two different meanings, it is called 'Dwi-Sandhana Kavya' and if it gives three different meanings, it is called 'Tri-Sandhana Kavya'.

'Raghava Pandaveeya', a 12th century composition written

by Poet Kaviraja narrates the story of Sri Rama and that of the Pandava Kings simultaneously. Similarly, another poet Chidambara Sumati of the 16th century, a Court Poet in the Vijayanagara Empire, has composed the 'Raghava Pandaviya Yadaveeyam' which narrates the story of Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavata simultaneously.

Each stanza in this work is capable of threefold interpretation applicable to Rama, Krishna and Arjuna.

Kankana Bandha Ramayana: Another feat of poetic genius in Sanskrit is the 'Kankana Bandha Ramayana' [Kankana means bangle in Sanskrit] written as late as the 19th century.

This consists of only one shloka of 32 letters arranged in a circular form like a bangle. By reading it from left to right and vice-versa starting from any letter, we get a poem of 62 verses in the regular form which deals with some incidents in Sri Rama's life. It is learnt that a

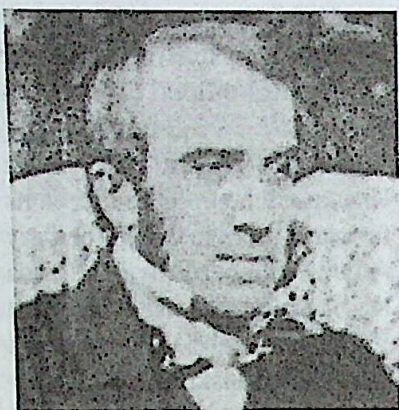
copy of this rare composition is in the possession of the Saraswathi Mahal Library at Tanjore.

Viloma Kavya: The Chitra Kavya reached the zenith of its fame and glory in the 16th century A.D. when poet Daivajna Surya Kavi wrote the 'Ramakrishna Viloma Kavya' [Viloma means reverse in Sanskrit].

Surya Kavi hailed from a place called Parthapura in the Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh. This is a composition containing 36 shlokas or verses, the like of which the world has rarely seen in any language in any age. Each Shloka has four lines.

The first two lines narrate an incident in the life of Sri Rama while the 3rd and the 4th lines narrate a scene from Sri Krishna's life.

The uniqueness of the composition lies in the fact that the 3rd line is composed by reversing the order of letters in the 2nd line; the 4th line is composed by reversing the order of letters in the 1st line.



Prof Monier-Williams

The poet himself in his own versified introduction of 7 stanzas has explained the difficulties besetting such a task and the limitations he had to undergo and the limited liberties he was allowed.

What greater tribute to the richness, variety, versatility and uniqueness of Sanskrit could be paid than the following words of Prof. Monier Monier-Williams who wrote the very first Sanskrit-English dictionary more than 150 years ago: "We are appalled by the length of some of India's literary productions as compared with those of European countries.

For example, Virgil's *Aeneid* [Epic Poem] is said to consist of 9,000 lines; Homer's *Iliad* of 12,000 lines and *Odyssey* of 15,000 lines, whereas the Sanskrit epic poem Mahabharata consists of at least two lakh lines without reckoning the supplement called 'Harivamsha'. In some subjects too, especially in poetic description of nature and domestic affection, Indian works do not suffer by comparison with the best specimens of Rome and Greece and while in wisdom and depth, shrewdness of their moral apothegms they are unrivalled"

या मृषयो मंत्रकृतो मनीषिणः
अन्वैच्छन् देवास्तपसा श्रमेण ।
तां देवीं वाचं हविषा यजामहे
सा नो दधातु सुकृतस्य लोके ।।

—**Taittiriya Brahmanam-
11.8.8**

meaning "We worship with oblations that Divine tongue [Sanskrit] which the Gods and the learned Vedic seers realised through hard penance. May she keep us in the world of the blessed!" ■

Encyclopaedic Works in Sanskrit

Radha Krishnamurthy

An encyclopaedic work aims at either giving something about everything or everything about something. Accordingly, we find a number of encyclopaedic works in Sanskrit and a few in other Indian languages which represent, in a concise form, the vast mass of ancient Indian thought.

Three types of compilations are found in Sanskrit from the Vedic times and they are: *Kosa* (like *Nirukta*, *Vaijayanti* etc.), *Jnanakosa* (like *Sarvadarsana Sangraha* etc.) and *Vijnanakosa* or *Visvakosa* (like *Brhat Samhita*, *Yukti Kalpataru* etc.).

Among these, *Kosa* is a lexicon or compilation of words, their synonyms, etc. *Jnanakosa* deals exhaustively with one main theme and its allied branches. It is an anthology of details related to one main subject which may

be called a subject encyclopaedia. *Vijnanakosa*, as the name suggests, contains information on all varied branches of knowledge.

The quintessence of Indian culture, philosophy, religion, sciences, arts, etc. is discernible in these *Vijnanakosas* or *Visvakosa*, the general encyclopaedias. We find a large number of such *Visvakosas* in Sanskrit.

The Vedas may be called encyclopaedic in nature, since they inform us more than one branch of knowledge in one way or other. Vedic literature is

Vedic literature is considered as the store-house of knowledge like philosophy, religion, economics, medicine, science, fine arts etc.

considered as the store-house of knowledge like philosophy, religion, economics, medicine, science, fine arts etc.

The origin or source of any subject is traced back to Vedas wherein are found references to almost all branches of knowledge.

The innumerable subjects which have been developed into full fledged science or art in our country owe something or other to the Vedas which express directly or indirectly varieties of ideas related to a wide range of subjects.

In the most remarkable Sanskrit work, the great epic Mahabharata consisting of eighteen *Parvas*, we find incidental references to several subjects other than polity and it is rightly said that what is not here can be found nowhere else. (*Yannehasti natakvacit*).

It may be styled as not only *Ithihasa*, *Akhyana* and *Purana*, but also as a *Kavya*, *Dharmasastra*, *Arthasastra*, *Kamasastra*, *Nitisastra*, *Rajasastra*, *Moksasastra* etc.

This epic has furnished thousands of material and inspiration to poets, artists, politicians, law givers and several others.

The synthetic nature of this work raises it to the status of an encyclopaedic work.

The *Ramayana*, the excellent *Kavya* composed by sage Valmiki, is a unique document that has been influencing deeply the religious and moral thoughts as well as the literary and artistic production in our country.

We get beautiful portrayals of different sentiments (*rasas*) and graphic description of nature in many aspects.

Poet Valmiki has skillfully introduced and described all types of characters such as human, superhuman and subhuman, all types of relationships in family, in society and political field, duties of each and every class of society etc.

The epic deals with several other subjects like *Arthasastra*, *Dharmasastra* and others. It depicts numerous aspects of the Aryan culture.

Swami Vivekananda has

rightly said that the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are the two encyclopaedias of the ancient Aryan life and wisdom portraying an ideal civilisation which humanity has yet to aspire hereafter.

The *purana* literature in Sanskrit is extensive. Even though all the eighteen *mahapuranas* and more than a hundred *upapuranas* deal with multifarious subjects, the precise encyclopaedic character is peculiar to a few of them, namely, *Matsya*, *Agni* and *Garuda*.

These *Puranas* besides dealing with the usual topics contain chapters on subjects like astronomy, astrology, omens, superstitions, medicines, treatment of cows, horses, elephants, knowledge of snakes, snake bites, gems, politics, science of war, archery, use of arms, horticulture, agriculture, poetics, grammar, lexicography, dramaturgy, music, dance, architecture and so on.

Thus these *Puranas* contain everything of general interest.

Swami Vivekananda has rightly said that the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are the two encyclopaedias of the ancient Aryan life and wisdom portraying an ideal civilisation which humanity has yet to aspire hereafter.

Summaries and fragments of rare ancient works.

Among the *upapuranas*, Vishnu *Dhamotthara* may be classified among encyclopaedic works in Sanskrit.

It is divided into more than eight hundred subjects and has systematically treated almost all subjects to be learnt by one aspiring for all the four *purusharthas*. They serve as reliable guides to the study of hundreds of branches of knowledge and afford us a great insight into ancient Indian cultural life.

Master of various Buddhistic and Hindu *Tantras* entertained the idea of condensation of various branches of knowledge,

including the literature pertaining to their own school of thought to make them more popular with the devotees. This resulted in the production of a large number of encyclopaedias in Sanskrit.

It is said that the thirty-two *Yamala Tantras* each extending to a length of 30,000 *slokas* are now found scattered in different libraries like the Thanjavur Saraswathi Mahal Library and other oriental libraries. Besides accounts of various subjects, vedic rites are analysed and classified, branches of politics, industrial development, mineralogy etc. are dealt with in this *Tantra*.

The value of this work lies in bringing to light many ancient rare works of arts and sciences. A few more *Tantra* works such as *Rudra Yamala*, *Kasyapiya*, *Uddisatantra*, *Kamyaka* and *Haramekhala Tantra* are extensive works dealing with multifarious arts and sciences. Several *Tantric* works are now lost but numerous quotations from them in later works form independent treatises on various subjects.

Samrajyalakshmipitika is a part of *Akasha Bhairavakalpa* of *Mahasaivatantra* and is of encyclopaedic nature containing all the subjects that a prince has to learn to achieve his ambitions. Hence, it is popularly known as an emperor's manual meant to be studied by kings.

It deals mainly with the *tantric* worship of *Samrajya Lakshmi* but contains detailed chapters on many subjects like science of warfare, weaponry, horselore, elephantlore, chariots, festivals, recreations, royal palaces, hunting etc.

It is a very enjoyable and instructive type of work which may be taken as a useful guide for fashioning the daily life of an individual. In the Thanjavur Saraswathi Mahal Library there are personal copies of this work inscribed with names of princes which prove that this encyclopaedic work was regularly studied and practised by the princes of Thanjavur and Vijayanagar period.

Brhatsamhita is an outstanding encyclopaedic work

Visvakosa 'Yuktikalpataru' compiled by the renowned king Bhoja is a treatise that has proved useful to scholars interested in Indian antiquities as it supplies interesting information on scores of varied subjects.

in Sanskrit written by the great astrologer and astronomer Varahamihira who is believed to have flourished during the later period of the Gupta age. This work is a veritable mine of information related to the cultural history of India. It contains more than hundred chapters extending over four thousand *slokas*.

Constellations, planetary positions, rainfall, earthquake, meteors, exploring underground water, architecture and many more subjects are dealt with. A few chapters are of highly specialised nature and are studied

as independent treatises. This great work abounds in experiences of the views of great men of wisdom like *Garga*, *Parasara*, *Badarayana* and others and serve as a treasure-house of information about a number of earlier writers and their works. The work has been translated into Arabic and English.

Abhilashitartha Chintamani, popularly known as *Manasollasa*, is a great encyclopaedic work in Sanskrit composed by the Chalukyan king Bhulokamalla Someswara III. The work is divided into five *Vimsatis* or groups of twenty chapters having subdivisions. Thus this remarkable work is divided into a hundred chapters which deal with a hundred different topics.

The five *Vimsatis* are – *Rajyapraptikarana Vimsati*, *Praptarajasyasthairyikarana Vimsati*, *Upbhoga Vimsati*, *Vinoda Vimsati* and *Krida Vimsati*. Thus Someswara III has intelligently summed up practically every branch of

learning chiefly of secular interest. The author has presented many original ideas in the chapters dealing with music. *Manasollasa* is a unique Visvakosa, a book of wisdom that benefits one and all (*Sastram Visvopakarakam*) and as a universal teacher (*Jakadacharyapusthaka*).

Todarananda is an extensive encyclopaedia of civil and religious law, fasts, festivals, ceremonies, gifts, modes of conduct, medicine, astronomy etc. compiled by the celebrated finance minister of Akbar, Todarmal, a man of versatile genius. The book is divided into twenty sections called *Saukhyas*, further divided into subsections.

The work in complete form would certainly serve as a valuable guide book to those interested in Indian culture.

'*Viramitrodaya*' of *Mitramisra* of the early seventeenth century is a vast digest in Sanskrit embracing all branches of *Dharmasastra* and is probably the largest known work on the subject. It is divided into

twenty-two sections called *prakasas*. In each *prakasa*, the author deals in detail with all aspects related to a particular subject. P. V. Kane has said that the entire work must have covered about two lakh *slokas* (each of 32 syllables), i.e. they double Mahabharata in extent.

Visvakosa 'Yuktikalpataru' compiled by the renowned king Bhoja is a treatise that has proved useful to scholars interested in Indian antiquities as it supplies interesting information on scores of varied subjects.

Apart from the usual topics it provides chapters on vehicles, ships, ship building and so forth. It is noteworthy that subjects on ships, shipbuilding etc. are rarely found in other encyclopaedic works.

'*Sarangadhara Paddhati*' another *Visvakosa* was compiled by Sarangadhara who was a courtier of King Hammira, the great monarch of *Sakambari Desa*.

This treatise covers almost all aspects of human life, giving valuable information on topics related to Indian culture.

'*Upavanavinoda*', a chapter is a very popular treatise on arborihorticulture, often quoted by later authors. '*Sarangadhara Samhita*' of the same author who was a physician contains all information related to the science of medicine.

The list in encyclopaedic works in Sanskrit will not be complete without a mention of the magnificent *Visvakosa Sivatatvaratnakara* composed in 14000 Sanskrit verses by Keladi Basava Bhupala, the distinguished scholar King of Karnataka who ruled over the Keladi state in the early part of 17th century.

This voluminous work serves as a storehouse of information on all leading topics like philosophy, religion, arts, sciences, chemistry, medicine, polity, law and justice, cookery, cosmetics, entertainments and so on.

The entire work consists of 108 *Tarangas* (chapters), grouped under nine *Kallolas* (sections).

The author has taken the history of Keladi dynasty as the

central theme around which he has woven the beautiful fabric of this great work with accounts of scores of varied subjects. Besides, it gives useful information on the origin and rise of Vijayanagar empire, account of Vidyaranya etc. This work of Keladi Basava Bhupala is a unique and invaluable contribution to *Visvakosas* in Sanskrit. There is a mistaken idea that ancient Indian thinkers were interested only in *Jnana* (spiritual knowledge) than in *Vijnana* (knowledge in arts and sciences).

The foregoing account of a few *Visvakosas* proves this idea to be wrong. These works have mentioned several ancient treatises which are not extant now but it enables us to gauge what we have lost in the literary field of Sanskrit.

Of course, a sincere effort will certainly lead to the discovery of many more such works which may be lying hidden in the form of manuscripts. ■



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Shri P. V. Sankarankutty,

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Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan

K. M. Munshi Marg, Mumbai – 400 007.

Ph.: 23631261/ 2363 4462/ 23677547.

Fax: 022-2363 0058.

E-mail: bhavan@bhavans.info

or pvsankarankutty@vsnl.net

A Thousand Hymns on Lord's Sandals

T. P. Vanamamalai

Vedanta Desika's Paduka Sahasram occupies a unique place among the Vaishnavite Bhakti literature. The sandals of the Lord are more sublime than the Lord Himself. According to Sri Desika, the sandals represent a blend of two goddesses who are the heroines of this great poetical composition. All the followers of Vaishnavite faith hold no second opinion about the greatness and glory of the Padukas.

Lord Ram himself allowed His sandals to rule the kingdom for the benefit of the people. Through one sandal Sri Rama established his father's adherence to *satya palan* and

through the other, honoured the appeal of Bharat.

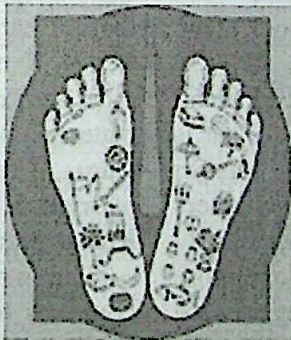
Any devotee while singing the glory of the God always pays tributes first to His feet and then moves up.

This is our tradition, but our Swami has taken one step forward. Instead of the feet, he has started from the sandals.

The language is easy Sanskrit, the total verses being 1008. Due to the grace of Lord

Ranganatha Swami, Sri Desika was able to complete the work in a single night. The poet accepts that he has been only an instrument.

The effort and success go to the credit of the Lord. The sandals worn by



Sri Rama are not at all different from those of Lord Ranganatha.

Even at the time of incarnation, the sandals are the integral parts of Lord's divine body. According to the Vaishnavite faith, the Padukas represent Nammalwar, the greatest among the 12 Alvars. Nammalwar is otherwise known as Shatakopan (Destroyer of the Wicked).

In all Vishnu temples, Shatari has a special position. The devotees feel an ecstatic pleasure and enjoy the divine grace when Shatari is placed on their head by the head priest or the Acharya. Shatari eliminates all the wicked thoughts from our mind. Similarly, Paduka Sahasram will make us sacred, and wise.

Now let us have a look at the composition. There are 32 chapters each one called Paddati (procedure) or system. What is the propriety behind it? Has Sri Desika numbered the chapters without any thought? Definitely not. "Padati" reveals one more meaning, that is moving forward methodically.

Sri Vedanta Desika has got his own unique status among the many preceptors (Acharyas) who appeared after Yatiraj Ramanuja. He was named Sri Venkatanathan. His birth place was Tirutanka, a small village near Kanchipuram. His father was Sri Anantha Suri and mother was Thotharamba. He was born under the influence of the star *sravan*, in the Tamil month of *purattasi* (*badho* in Hindi), and belonged to Vishwamitra Gotram.

It is being believed that the bell of Tirumalai temple itself, obeying the mandate of the Lord of the Seven Hills appeared in the world as Sri Desika.

Sri Venkatanathan had a sharp intellect. He underwent all the *sanskaras* and mastered the Vedas, Tamil Prabandam and other sacred Sanskrit texts. His maternal uncle, Appullar was his Guru. At the age of 20, he got married. His only son was Sri Kumar Varadachary.

The worldly charms and comforts had no place in Sri Desika's life. Due to the grace of

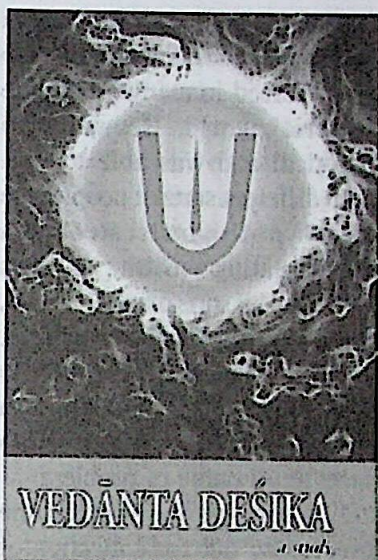
the Lord, he became well-known as a great Acharya, poet, scholar, philosopher and exponent and leader of Vishishtadwaita school.

A few miles away from Kanchipuram is a sacred place called Tiruahindrapuram, where the Lord is worshipped as Deivanayaka. Near the temple, even today there is a small hillock called Aoushadgiri. The Swami went up, sat under the holy tree and started meditation. He was chanting Garuda Mantra. Garuda appeared and was pleased to present the idol of Lord Hayagreeva and taught him Hayagreeva Mantram.

The Swami's genius brightened up. He travelled all over India, visited all the important Vaishnavite shrines, gained more knowledge and divine experience.

During his pilgrimage he had to meet many scholars of other schools of thoughts, defeated them and returned as a victorious monarch. He condemned their statements and established the supremacy of Lord Narayana.

He was in Kanchipuram for



some days and was invited to Srirangam to build the Vishishtadwaita school. He was surrounded by an illustrious group of disciples. His ardent followers gave him the title 'Kavithahithe Sinha' (a lion among the poets).

Lord Ranganatha glorified him with the title, Vedanta Charya and Goddess Ranganayaki conferred upon him, the title, Sarva Tantra Swatantra (a person endowed with full liberty to create and adopt all types of techniques.)

Swami Desika was not only a Vedantic scholar but was also well-versed in many arts of the material world. He was also practical and was able to deal with different sorts of people. He was not interested in accumulating wealth, and was free from all sorts of ego. Hatred, jealousy, unnecessary pride, anger were unknown to him. He was simple but had enough courage and balance of mind to meet any trouble or problem.

To earn his daily bread, he used to go out for collection of food materials as per the sastras. 'Enough for the day, don't save for tomorrow,' was his policy. Seeing his detachment, some well-wisher in his anxiety to help his family offered rice grains mixed with small gold particles. While cleaning the bowl, Sri Desika's wife separated them from rice and threw away the glittering pieces as per her husband's advice.

He had such a faithful partner. It is said that she had no jewels to wear and that only the compositions of her husband,

"Mummani Kovai, Nava Mani Malai", were her possession. The Swami's classmate, Vidyaranga, enjoying the patronage of Vijayanahara King, politely compelled Sri Desika to come to the court; but the Swami mildly pushed aside his request and remarked that a devotee of Lord Varadaraja of Kanchipuram is free from all types of wants. Sri Desika summed up his feelings in his composition called 'Vairagya Panchakam'. It was a child's play for the Swami to defeat other schools of thought. The debaters had no words to oppose him.

Once a vanquished Pandit used his magical power to torture the Swami. He went to a nearby tank, sipped palmful of water and chanted some mantras of wicked nature.

Sri Desika's stomach began to swell but he was not worried. He understood the magic of the opponent and drew a straight line with his nail on the nearby pillar. To the surprise of everybody, all the water drunk by the magician drained out of the pillar.

Sri Desika composed a drama "Sankalapa Suryodaya" just to prove the inadequate knowledge of another poet known as Krishna Misra. Another poet, Dindim challenged the Swami who proved that Dindim meant foam formed by the waves, hence no stability. The Swami was a great sculptor; to defeat another mason, he was able to construct a well with broken, unshaped bricks. The well exists even today.

Just to tease him, jealous people employed a snake charmer. Lured by the money promised, the snake charmer approached the Swami and let out his poisonous snakes. The Swami kept absolute silence, drew seven horizontal parallel lines on the ground.

Except one or two, the other snakes could not cross those lines. So the snake charmer let out a dreadful snake called, Shanka Pala. As it came very close, the Swami began to chant Garuda Thandalam.

The next moment, Garuda

came there and flew away with the Shanka Pala. The snake charmer fell at the Swami feet, and begged, "Sir pardon me, your enemies have sent me here. I won't have come here; only one request, please see that Shanka Pal comes back to me. That snake is the main source of my livelihood." The Swami look pity on this and sent him away with all the snakes.

His opponents were not keeping quiet. Somehow they wanted to mar his reputation. On a particular day the Swami was to observe his father's ceremony. Everything was prepared well and the Swami was waiting for the three Brahmins to consume the food items duly served. The three Brahmins were not allowed to go to the Swami's residence. They were frightened and retained by the enemies.

The Swami, as usual, was calm, drew the curtain and started chanting Purusha Suktham. The enemies were waiting outside. The curtain was removed. The food plates were empty. Oh, what a wonderful

scene! The three Brahmins who came there were the presiding deities of Srirangam, Kanchipuram and Tirumalai. From that moment, all his enemies and opponents recognised his greatness and gave up their childish mischievous acts.

Once, during travelling, as night was fast approaching, he could not proceed. Sri Hayagreeva's idol was always with him. Nothing was available to offer to the deity. He could offer only a handful of water. With fatigue and hunger, he slept on a platform like structure on the house of a merchant.

On the platform in a corner, sacks containing Bengalgram were piled up. The merchant came out in the night because he felt that somebody was munching the grams and saw that a horse was emptying the sacks. He tried his best to drive it away but failed. So he requested the Swami for help. The Swami said: "Bring some milk". The milk was offered to the Lord. Next

moment, the horse disappeared. The merchant came to know about the Swami's knowledge and devotion and gave necessary materials for the worship of the Almighty.

During Muslim invasions, temples were demolished; jewels were taken away and holy places desecrated. At Srirangam, about 12,000 Vaishnava devotees gave up their lives to protect the temple and the deity.

Sri Sudarsana Bhattar, the author of "Srutha Prahashina" was not able to survive. So Sri Desika with the manuscript and two songs of the author had to flee towards the forest area of Mysore. There he had a congenial atmosphere to preach and establish his faith. After many years, he returned to Srirangam and to serve Lord Ranganatha. Finally he left for his abode.

The total number of works composed by him were 113 (Sanskrit 118, Tamil 24 and Prohit 1). He had complete mastery over Sanskrit and Tamil. Unfortunately all his works are not available. ■

Individual Personality: Vedantic Perspective

Durgalakshmi Pathanjali*

Vedanta possesses the unique greatness of having a contemporary value for all people at all times. The Vedantic outlook symbolises the most universal aspect of any pursuit, philosophical or otherwise.

The Upanishads contain the knowledge of that point at which all human efforts find fulfillment. If we become aware of the assimilative perspective of Vedanta, it enters all phases of life.

In intellectual circles and others, a common opinion is that religion is a pursuit of an ethereal goal. Whenever we speak of it, we conjure a principle which is related to the divine, being something other than the seeker. This becomes a partial understanding of the

basic concept.

Religion and philosophy are comprehensive while linking the divine to us. Those who seek, they connect the individual with the universe as much as the physical with the metaphysical. The individual's personality is trained to establish a positive relationship with the existence, as a whole.

When understood in this light, the ideal religion is not to chase a hypothetical object, but to understand the intimacy among living and non-living beings put together. It becomes an attitude and all actions are based on the need to fulfil thinking, feeling or doing aspects of human personality.

Initially, we have to

** Department of Sanskrit and Prakrit
languages, University of Pune, Pune.*

understand that religion conceives in itself various levels of relationship, with man as the centre.

Man and other human beings, man with other living and inanimate objects and finally man's relationship with the divine are the three circles which are concentric.

As the person evolves, he moves from one concentric sheath to the other and finally enters into a universal relationship with all existence.

Now that we have mentioned evolution, we need to look at development of personality in the human as a serious exercise. One cannot sit leisurely and hope for a mechanical growth with zero personal input.

Dependent largely on the individual's initiative, evolution has to be a scheme wherein all growth is positive and the movement is always upward. Lesser the positive approach and vision, greater will be the hindrances to the understanding of what constitutes the Inner Self.

In intellectual circles and others, a commonly prevalent opinion is that religion is a pursuit of an ethereal goal.

Then steps in the Vedantic context. As observed from the various religious concepts based on Vedanta, we observe that there are many ways in which the elements are held in relationship. They are primarily held as ontologically distinct and individualised. They are also interrelated as a whole and its parts.

Again they may be identical in a unique sense. When they are in a multipolar relationship, each entity is poised to defend its own against the other. It is interesting to note that in this scheme, even the divine aspect is forced to being monadic and atomic. So, we are confused regards this scheme, where as against all normal conceptions, God ceases to be an all-pervasive principle. He is not a Visesa!

Contrasted with this approach is the generic or organic relationship of beings with each other.

The discrete individual entities fall into a unity. The multiple factors subserve the purpose of the universe.

To quote K.B.Ramachandra Rao, "The nearest approximation is the picture of the Cosmic Person (Viratpurusha) with a thousand heads, a thousand eyes and a thousand legs.

However, in this attempt, if the whole is equated with the parts by an arithmetical function or equation, it will be a poor show of patheism, in which the whole is exhausted in the very parts.

Dependent largely on the individual's initiative, evolution has to be a scheme where in all growth is positive and the movement is always upward.

But on the other hand, if the relationship between entities and the system is conceived in terms of the alter's inexhaustibility or transcendence, the religious quest becomes more comprehensive and attractive." This scheme again as we can see falls short of the objective of perfect fulfilment.

The third alternative is where the entities are conceived as identical in an essential and unique way. Here the striving is not to lose oneself in the whole, but to gain it as the whole. The differences are realised as non-existing and it is an Absolute condition.

The Absolute is resolved into Infinity which is sheathless. It is again not a movement towards negativity. It is a prompting to go beyond and remain immeasurable while measuring all.

When a minimum of two personalities interact the goal remains to co-exist in a positive way. We have to make provisions for capacities to

Our life's goal is attainment of a state of moral and intellectual perfection, simultaneously transcending the distinctions we all make between the Higher and the not-Self.

unite and integrate. God here is vital by being immanent and transcendent i.e the being of everything and is also the becoming of everything.

When the individual works on only one factor of his personality it brings out a lopsided achievement. One has to utilise all sectors without underestimating the Absolute.

In order to gain real fulfilment, one cannot afford to ignore the inner connections. The ideal, the effort, the understanding and the collective emotions, all have to be harmonised to attain the Infinite.

Firmly discarding any suggestion of dichotomy between philosophy and religion, Vedanta insists on the unity of theory and practice.

In the words of Hiriyanna: "Philosophy was never armchair study in ancient India, and what turned great minds to it was not a desire merely 'to advance knowledge', as the phrase now goes, but an intense interest in the problems of practical life and did not tolerate the slightest divorce of practice from precept."

Our life's goal is attainment of a state of moral and intellectual perfection, simultaneously transcending the distinctions we all make between the Higher and the not-Self.

The Upanishads exhort us to persevere properly in our chosen path, as they prove that the above goal is achievable in our current life itself. Motivated by this sacred lore, we the seekers of the modern era, move on with our life and living. ■

Four Paths of Bhakti Yoga

S. T. V. Raghavan

In the course of his long sermon to Arjuna, Lord Krishna says: *"Those I consider as the most perfect in Yoga, who, with their minds fixed on Me in steadfast love, worship Me with absolute faith".*

(BG.XII.2)

The Geethacharya then proceeds to expound the essential components of *Bhakti Yoga* which is the path of devotion to Isvara or personal God with form and attributes, as distinct from meditation on impersonal Brahman. The Lord recognises that even sincere aspirants are different in their emotional quotients and inborn hankering for God.

Accordingly diversifies the discipline of *Bhakti Yoga* into four distinct paths suitable for different types of Sadhakas and at the sametime leading them to the same goal of God-realisation.

The four paths are:

(1) Be focussed on God alone with your mind and intellect; undoubtedly you will then abide in Him for ever more.

(2) If such devotion would be

difficult for you, try to reach Him through systematic practice of concentration.

(3) If such concerted effort is also beyond your capacity, then devote yourself to works of service to God, and discharging of duties for His sake; you can thus attain the perfection.

(4) If even this is too difficult for you, then surrender the fruits of all your actions to God, taking refuge in Him.

(BG. XII. 8-11)

On careful examination, it may be seen that the four paths are not graded steps in the order of merit, but equally valid paths to the ultimate goal. Each contains elements of Bhakti as well as Karma Yoga. A sincere and earnest seeker can pursue any of these paths best suited to his temperament and capacity.

The first are centred on personal God with form and attributes, and the emphasis is on devotion to Him. There is no specific mention about duties since such devotees are unlikely to be interested in secular occupations or pursuit of wealth.

The second path is *Abhyasa Yoga* which includes contemplation on the infinite auspicious qualities of God and chanting of His sacred names (*sahasranama*) to turn the mind towards Him and control the senses. Bhakti practices such as *sravana*, *smarana*, *vandana*, *kirtana*, etc. would be consistent with this Yoga.

In the latter two paths the emphasis is on performance of work with the right attitude and without ego hassles. There is a specific reference in the third path to service of God (*matkarma*). In a very wide sense, the whole universe is the Lord's, and all the work that one performs as a member of the social order is service to God. Such service consists in performing duties in temples,

like assisting in daily temple rituals, organising festivals and looking after the needs of worshippers, pilgrims, etc.

The last path is intended for aspirants who regard God as a formless, all-pervading higher power. The term *sarva karma phala tyaga* denotes complete renunciation of the fruits of all actions, accepting God as the agency as well as the enjoyer. This is a reiteration of what the Lord says in Ch. IX-26: "Whatever you do, whatever you eat or offer in sacrifice, or give as charity, whatever austerity you perform, do that as an offering to Me" (*yat karoshi.....tat kurushva madarpanam*). The Geethacharya specially emphasises that abandonment of the fruits of works as well as the sense of doership is even better than meditation, and is

The Lord recognises that even sincere aspirants are different in their emotional quotients and inborn hankering for God.

immediately followed by peace.

(BG.XII-12).

The qualities of the Bhakta are also described:

‘Friendly and compassionate to all and without any touch of hatred; devoid of possessiveness and arrogance; ever content and contemplative; alike in happiness and misery; self-controlled and firm in conviction; dedicated to Me with heart and soul.’

The Lord says that such a man is dear to Him.

(B.G.XII: 13-14)

In his commentary on Srimad Bhagavad Gita (the scripture of mankind), Swami Tapasyananda highlights the special significance of Chapter XII – Bhakti Yoga, thus:

‘It is fallacious to say that Bhakti discipline is only a handmaid of the Jnana discipline. At least the doctrine of the Gita is that both these are self-sufficient disciplines, that neither needs to be subordinated to the other, and indeed they take the spiritual pilgrim to the same Supreme Being. Bhakti has special excellences. In this path

there is no contradiction between work and spiritual pursuit if the work is of the nature of service to the Lord. The seeker of self-realisation through Jnana has to go on his own momentum after initial guidance from a Guru. On the other hand, Bhakta gets inspiration and onward propulsion from God Himself. It is Bhakti that completes the Gita doctrine of dedicated and detached work’. (Reference here is to B.G.III.30 ‘mayi sarvaani karmaani,’ etc.)

Thus, Bhakti Yoga as postulated in the Gita is like an expressway which has separate lanes for different types of vehicles proceeding in the same direction. Likewise, it offers distinct paths for aspirants of different temperaments and inclinations but enabling them all to reach the same destination. Has not the Lord assured us, “Whosoever worships Me by whatsoever path, I verily accept and bless them in that way” (*ye yatha Maam prapadyante taamstathaiva bhajaamyaham*)

(BG.4.11). ■

Swadhyaya Valmiki Ramayana



भगवन् किं तदा लोकाः शून्या आसन् द्विजोत्तम ।
घर्षणां यत्र न प्राप्तो रावणो राक्षसेश्वरः ।।

*bhagavan kim tadaa lokaah shoonyaa aasan dvijottama
dharshanaam yatra na praapto raavano raakshaseshvarah*
(Lord Rama spoke to sage Agastya:-) O Revered Lord, O best
among Brahmins! Were the people (on earth) devoid of heroic
power at the time when Ravana, the Lord of Demons, ranged
over the earth and he did not come in the confrontation with any
warriors?

उताहो हीनवीर्यास्ते बभूवुः पृथिवीक्षितः ।
बहिष्कृता वरास्त्रैश्च बहवो निर्जिता नृपाः ।

*utaaho heenaveeryaaste babhoovuh prithiveekshitah
bahishkritaa varaashtraishcha bahavo nirjitaa nripaah*
Or the rulers, at that time, were very weak and devoid of strength?
Or they were deprived of the excellent weapons, or it was the
case that many of the kings were already defeated by him
(Ravana)?

राघवस्य वचः श्रुत्वा अगस्त्यो भगवानृषिः ।
उवाच रामं प्रहस्तन् पितामह इवेश्वरम् ॥

*raaghavasya vachah shrutvaa agastyo bhagavaanrishih
uvaacha raamam prahasan pitaamaha iveshvaram*
Listening to the questions of Lord Rama, the glorious sage Agastya
laughingly replied to Lord Rama, as Lord Brahma would speak
to Lord Shiva:

स एवं बाधमानस्तु पार्थिवान् पार्थिवर्षभ ।
चचार रावणो राम पृथिवीं पृथिवीपते ॥

*sa evam baadhamaanastu paarthivaan paarthivarshabha
chachaara raavano raama prithiveem prithiveepate*
O best among the Kings, Rama! Ravana continuously ranged over
the earth, harassing the kings.

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BHAVA

Jainism

The Reforming and Transforming Religion

Sahsson Maitreya

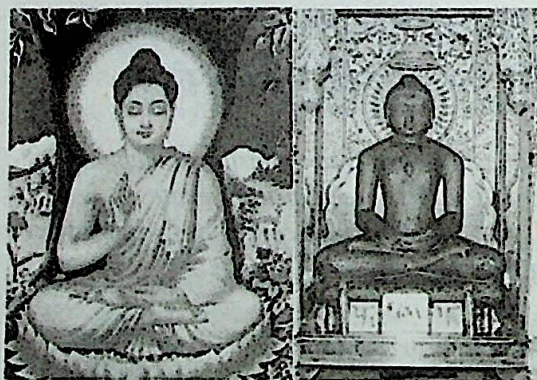
Luckily for India, when racial discriminations were taking intolerable roots, it produced religious leaders like Mahavir and Buddha to check the human race from violent behaviour and to guide and transform it in the direction of restraint and progress.

Jainism is one major movement we find asylum when we try to

understand some social puzzles. Jain movement captures one of the most significant progression of human thought and its capability to progress by influencing the way of how to look at others .

Our country had the gene to produce non-violence as a tool of resistance and executed tenaciously for many years even through ordinary people and restrained itself from outbreak of violence despite:

a. Our country's history is marked by internal and external wars all the time. Violent wars of internal and external aggressions are part and parcel of our



Buddha and Mahavir

history except for a few extraordinary periods of peace.

b. We rarely see a Hindu god without a tool of war and almost all gods have a history of slaughter of a evil (*samharam*). Of course there are few exceptions.

c. Mother Durga who is revered and loved by the masses, was created by the fusion of many male Gods, purely for war and is worshipped as God of war by Rama, Arjuna, Shivaji etc.

d. Even Bhagavad Gita has a faint stint of war as a path to establish righteousness/dharma and many rishis are indirectly involved in war for the same reason.

e. The Hindu puranas have stories of sacrifice and tolerance, and some heart moving non-violent behaviour to establish Dharma like the acceptance and execution of Kaikeyi's boons without any resistance even in thought by Rama.

Non-violence sometimes forms part of achieving Dharma or to hold faith or ideologies in other religions, but in Jainism non-

In Jainism non- violence, non-injury to physique, thought or intent is the first and foremost vow and not one of the many paths to Dharma as in Hinduism(or holding faith or an ideology as in Christianity).

violence, non-injury to physique, thought or intent is the first and foremost vow and not one of the many paths to Dharma as in Hinduism(or holding faith or an ideology as in Christianity). It is an object and way of life and it is the central ideology of Jainism. Here we also emphasise that almost all religions have truth, non-violence as one of the central concepts and their contribution is, by no means, less significant.

Mahavira during his 12 years search for salvation had to go through physical onslaught, bruises, violent behaviour of some aboriginals including those setting dogs on him. Yet he took a vow of not to hurt any beings

by thought, word or deed and sets a great role model in history.

Jainism is not a revolutionary religion and not one newly formed like Buddhism with which it has only subtle differences. The 23rd Thirthankara Parshva (250 years before Mahavira) is generally believed to have formed the first "foetus" of Jainism with his four vows of abstinence from injury, telling lie, stealing and from external possession. Mahavira the 24th Thirthankara added the fifth vow namely to abstain from indulgence in sex. Mahavira, the reformer and the most significant Thirthankara of Jainism has laid down non-violence or ahimsa as the central concept of the Jain ethics and as the first most important religious vow for all.

Even before the 23rd Thirthankara, Jainism had the trace of non-violence in its gene. The 22nd Thirthankara, Nemi who is believed to be the cousin of Lord Krishna, has the history of leaving his wedding ceremony on hearing a lowing cry of cattle to be slaughtered for wedding

guests to feast upon, and became an ascetic as per Jain tradition.

Mahavira tells, "Unmindfulness and attachment to sensuous objects are the source of violence (Mahavir's first Anga). An observance of non-violence will contemplate that if others are in starving poverty or insufficiency, he has no right to enjoy life rolling in luxury" for which Mahatma Gandhi is an embodiment. And Gandhism went a step further in this transformation process by developing non-violence as a social tool and way of living.

The above points support why Jainism can be credited to be the originator and champion of non-violence than Hinduism or Buddhism. Nevertheless, the good aspect of non-violence is assimilated and executed by all.

Here no Indian can neglect the contribution made by Asoka. In his effort to spread Buddhism he had vigorously promoted against violence (halo effect of his earlier violent war) throughout our land and beyond. Same goes for Harsha who again

had a painful personal sorrow on account of his sister's suffering.

The unselfish love of Buddhism is best captured in mans' non-violent behaviour in deed and thought. The world is indebted to all those numerous men and women who became disciples and followers of these two great religions for their relentless effort to spread non-violence, love and equality treatment.

Vegetarianism

About 70% of vegetarians of the world are believed to live in India, though vegetarianism reportedly originated independently from various parts of the world.

a. Many scholars say that all sects of the Vedic religion including Brahmins were once non-vegetarians.

b. Some Vedic verses deal mainly on animal sacrifices and some even narrate that animal flesh to be given as feast even to rishis to achieve an objective.

c. Even in Valmiki's Ramayana, Sri Rama and Sita enjoy deer meat during their exile in the forest. But in the

regional versions of Ramayana in 12th century like Kamba Ramayana, Rama is never depicted as a non-vegetarian. There is a transformation in Sri Rama himself from the original to the regional edition, not by error, but ,by the transformation of our perception and the author's perception of acceptance by the readers.

Such a transformation was achieved in the struggle among religions which sometimes competed, assimilated, complemented and even compromised. Even Buddhism accepts non-vegetarian under certain conditions, but Jainism sternly opposes it. Its ability to compromise amicably with Vedic religion and Brahmins and its many sidedness of truth theory with all the 11 disciples of Mahavira being Brahmins helped. It also survived and influenced the Vedic religious people to accept vegetarianism (which was well received by the then agricultural society).

And the people of Jainism/ Buddhism who became Hindus

retained and injected vegetarianism in it.

This highly important transformation of making humanity come out of animal or individualistic/sectarian behaviour marked by violence was possible only by the proselytising (one who comes out from one religion to another), religions like Jainism.

It is difficult to give credit to any religion for bringing in a good trait to society because most of the good aspects are present in all the religions. Yet there are certain concepts that are very central to each religion (at least perceived due to the importance given within that religion or due to chronology factors) like Islam's brotherhood and submission to God, Christianity's faith and salvation from sins, Buddhism's unselfishness and love,

Hinduism's Dharma and Bhakthi, Jainism has non-violence as its central concept.

This non-violence is the one which acted as a great internal restrainer against violent behaviour and mans' instinct to use "tools" of aggression from the Iron Age till the IT age.

As a mark of humanity's progress and differentiation from other species, the human being's capability to restraint violence and show love towards fellow human beings and others, is going to be the single yardstick.

We only wish that thousands of unselfish men and women walk the earth preaching and making people realise that fellow men, living beings, eco systems are not meant to receive reprimand or aggression from tools but the love of compassionate hearts. ■

SWEET THOUGHT

Sri Krishna Sweets

PRODUCERS OF PURE GHEE SWEETS

**SOME MEN ARE MIGHTY IN
THEIR FALLACIES AND
BEAUTIFUL IN THEIR
ERRORS.**

- Sydney Smith

The Martyrdom Day of Shree Guru Teg Bahadur

Madhavdas Mamtani

Shree Guru Teg Bahadur is an embodiment of God who, with chanting of "Ram Nam", gave solace to people in alleviating their grievances, treating them as if he was one of them.

During his lifetime he travelled to many cities rendering spiritual preachings. For enlightening the

common men he started travelling from Chakmata Nani (Anandpur Sahib) to Kiratpur and then to a village three miles away from it, where he resided for some time.

Owing to heavy rain, the poor peasants and others suffered as their agriculture perished and houses were washed away. The *sangat* of other villages thronged for the *darshan* of Guruji.

The Guruji directed them to help the poor peasants and others whose agriculture was hit and houses destroyed.

The villagers also faced the problem of drinking water. The Guruji also helped them financially to dig new wells.

Thereafter, from Kurukshetra, he reached Banpur. A peasant narrated to him about the problem of drinking water



and also told him that the availability of land was quite less and insufficient to meet the people's livelihood.

The Guruji directed the villagers to dig a well, purchase land and construct a 'dharamshala' where Harikirtan could be recited.

The village had become famous as Banibadarpur.

Thereafter, the Guruji visited Sikha (Punjab) where he stayed near a pond and below a banyan tree. In that pond, shoemakers used to wash the leather. Therefore, water became polluted.

The villagers began to suffer from epidemics like fever because of that and told Gurudev that many were afflicted by the epidemic of high fever resulting in the deaths of many.

The Guruji told them that the root cause of the epidemic fever was bad air caused by the washing of animal leather and therefore, it was necessary to clean the pond.

He himself started cleaning

the pond with his hands. Seeing this, the villagers and followers of Guruji also started cleaning the pond and it was cleaned in a short time.

The Guruji himself took bath in the pond later. The family members of a diseased man advised the latter to take bath and he became normal and healthy. The news spread in the village like wild fire and people with the epidemic became healthy after taking bath in it.

The Guruji advised everyone to chant (Satnam) and practise good behaviour. There is a large *sarovar* now in that village in place of the old pond and its name is *Gurusar*. Even now people who take bath in it, recover from all diseases.

The Guruji was born in Amritsar on Vaishakh Vadi Sanvat 5, 1678 (equivalent to English date of April 1, 1621). He sacrificed his life to save the Hindus on Saka Maghar Sudhi 5, Savant 1732, equivalent to the English date of December 19, 1675.■

Future of Humanity

Prof. O. S. Reddi

There is not one intelligent but several. And I would like to know how a Nobel Prize winner would feel if he were by some set of circumstances to find himself alone in a jungle, faced with a need to survive.

— *Francis Jacob*

Evolution of man is not confined only to the past. The mechanism that brings in changes from one generation to another through change is gene frequencies. Gene frequency is the number of gametes, that is, spermatozoa that carry the gene.

Hence, knowledge of these mechanisms is essential for us to understand and to predict future trends in the genetic composition of human populations. The limitations inherent in such attempts are threefold.

One is that extrapolation is possible only from the present trends though human history has been shaped by unpredictable events. Such an assessment is also true for the biological history of man, which is now

inextricably intertwined with cultural, social and political history as well as with the future development of human biology and medicine.

The second limitation is that revolutionary future scientific developments are expected from the present trend. The last one is that we assume in modern society, special attention will be given to health and medicine and also preventive medicine will gain importance.

These explorations are subject to human survival and social progress will continue in capitalistic and other societies.

The main forces that determine evolution are genetic drift mutation, and selection when the population is completely isolated with no gene

flow as in the rigid caste system in India. The chance fluctuations of gene frequencies can lead to appreciable genetic differences between sub-populations.

In modern Western society, there is a tendency towards breaking down of isolates and increasing intermarriages between different populations. This trend will not get reversed in the future and new isolates of a small size will be formed.

Thus chance fluctuations (genetic drift) which have played an important role in human evolution, will almost cease to operate. If this trend in human breeding structure continues, a new species of man will not develop, since for the creation of reproductive isolation, a subgroup is absent.

Science fiction writers often discuss the creation of new human like species. The currently existing genetic variability coupled with selective breeding of man could not lead to such a new species. One would have to create novel genetic combinations with technology

not available today with rigorous enforcement of selective breeding. These possibilities are remote.

But we can create new types of viruses by shuffling of DNA or RNA by using existing genetic variability.

Mutation

The two factors that cause changes in or shift gene frequencies are mutation and selection. Mutations and all chromosomal aberrations are unfavourable for the individual as well as for the population. Most chromosomal aberrations kill the zygote, during the embryonic development, a minority survive upto birth or still longer but affected patients suffer from severe malformations.

Gene mutation often leads to inherited disease or to defects in multifactorial genetic systems. A large fraction of point mutations lead to changes in the amino acid sequences of proteins and causes no functional deficiency. Mutations that bestow advantage are very few.

Mutation rates of numerical

Gene mutation often leads to inherited disease or to defects in multifactorial genetic systems. A very large fraction of point mutations lead to changes in the aminoacid sequences of proteins and causes no apparent functional deficiency.

chromosome increase with the age of mother. Hence, change in maternal age will lead to corresponding alterations in the total incidence of such chromosome mutations.

In many modern societies, there is an increasing trend towards a decrease in the number of children per family leading to a concentration of child births within the age groups of lowest risk, that is women in 20's. It was calculated that this trend alone will lead to a decrease of Down's Syndrome by about 20-40 per cent. If the child bearing is postponed to a somewhat higher age, the trend is reversed. On the

other hand, antenatal diagnosis is most efficient for early recognition of chromosomal abnormalities, which is available in most countries including India.

If all pregnant women above the age of 35 would use this procedure, a significant reduction of Down's Syndrome, depending on the age distribution of mothers would be expected. Anomalies due to numerical or structural chromosome aberrations will become completely avoidable.

On the other hand, the rate of gene mutations increase with the age of the father. The total impact of the paternal age effect is low and the possibility of an old father to have a child affected with a dominant mutation is almost negligible.

Any conceivable increase of radiation exposure will enhance the mutation rate by a few per cent. On the other hand, with the increasing exposure to chemicals in modern life, a small increase of mutation rate is to be expected which will lead to an increase of

structural and numerical chromosome aberrations and dominant X-linked hereditary disease.

Since cancer is caused by somatic mutations mostly induced by environmental chemicals, increase in cancer is to be expected. We can also anticipate decrease of lung cancer due to reduced cigarette smoking.

Selection

Natural selection is differential reproduction of genetically different individuals as a result of their endurance to environ, by chromosome aberrations. Also most patients with Down's and Klinefelter's Syndrome are not able to reproduce.

Natural selection has not changed for these conditions. But selection did show relaxation for some pathological traits with autosomal dominant or X-linked recessive modes of inheritance.

There are genetic diseases that have been maintained so far by genetic equilibrium between mutation and selection. One example is haemophilia (clotting disease) for which treatment is

now available with the substitution therapy of factor VI which enables patients to lead an almost normal life.

Life expectancy and the chance to have children is greatly improved. We can predict the incidence of this condition for some generations.

Retinoblastoma is a malignant eye tumour of young children. The great majority of cases are sporadic though some are familial cases. Surgical removal of the eye followed by X-irradiation and light coagulation leads to the cure of 80 per cent unilateral and 50 per cent bilateral cases. About 60 per cent of all new mutations for inherited cases are bilateral and about 40 per cent unilateral.

The inherited retinoblastoma will be two or three times more common, several generations after successful medical therapy has been introduced. The frequency will change from the current frequency of 1 in 40,000 to 1 in 15,000.

Natural selection is effective when acting through differential

mortality before the age of reproduction during childhood and youth. Endemic diseases, because they act at all times, will be more effective agents than epidemic diseases which act episodically. Diseases that affect a larger segment of population and diseases that kill children will be far more effective as selective agents.

Natural selection operates in all the living organisms, for example: red-green colour blindness is sex-linked and passed on to one-half of grandsons through the carrier daughter from the affected grandfather.

Primitive populations like Eskimos, Australian aborigines, North and South American Indian, and some tribes in India showed 2 per cent incidence of colour blindness, whereas urban population has to the extent of 5 per cent. For the survival of hunters and gatherers, colour vision is important as it provides obvious advantages in recognition of game for food, as well as of dangerous animals like snakes. The incidence of 5 per

cent colour blindness is a little high in view of the relative time lapse since the onset of Neolithic culture and introduction of agriculture.

Similarly, visual activity, hearing acuity, deformed nasal septa, small tear ducts, breast cancer, spina bifida, occulta appear to be more common among civilised people than primitive populations.

Relaxation of selection

Pyloric stenosis is a condition where patients have a hypertrophic pyloric muscle that prevents the stomach from emptying its contents into duodenum. In earlier times, before the advent of surgery affected individuals often died as infants. This condition is more frequent in male infants. The recurrent risk is about 2-6 per cent for first degree relatives of male patients and 10-20 per cent of first degree relatives of female patients.

Now surgical intervention by cutting the muscle allows the normal passage of food and all the ill-effects are removed. ■

वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलम् । वेदो नित्यमधीयताम् । वेदाः वयं वः शरणं प्रपन्नाः । वेदा ये नः परं धनम् ।



Advaita Vidyacharya Maharaja Sahab
SRI GOVINDA DEEKSHITHAR
PUNYA SMARANA SAMITHI (REGD.)

"Sri Govinda Deekshita Ghatika Sthanam"

29-30, East Iyen Street, (Entrance at Yagasalai St.) KUMBAKONAM, Tamil Nadu - 612001. India.
 Tel. No. Off: (0435) 2401789 Tele Fax : 2425948 Patasala : 2422866, 2401788
 E-mail : vedagdps@sancharnet.in Website : www.rajapatasala.in

An Appeal For the Preservation of Vedas and Sastras
for posterity under ancient traditional Gurukula System.

The Raja Veda Kavya Patasala, Kumbakonam was established in the year 1542 AD for the spread of Vedas and Shastras on the Southern Banks of the Sacred River Cauvery by the illustrious statesman - administrator **SAINT ADVAITHA VIDYACHARYA MAHARAJA SAHEB BHAGAWAN SRI GOVINDA DEEKSHITHAR** who was the Chief Minister to the three successive Naik Rulers of Tanjore. This is the only Patasala in Tamilnadu is functioning without interruption for the past 466 years, where all the three Vedas viz., RIG, YAJUR (Sukla & Krishna) and SAMA are taught with a time tested ancient syllabus under one roof to young students who are admitted at the tender age between 8-10 years. At present 200 students undergo training for a period ranging from six to ten years and they are given free boarding, lodging, clothing, transport, etc. 19 Adhyapakas impart knowledge to them.

After successful completion of their respective Vedic courses they are given encouragement for taking higher studies on Vedas and Shastras by highly qualified Adhyapakas of our patasala.

The New Patasala Building (13,500Sq ft) named as "Sri Govinda Dikshitar Ghatika Sthanam" was dedicated on 21.6.2004 by HH Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamigal of Kanchi Kamakoti Mutt.

To overcome the problem of growing expenses of our Patasala, donations are accepted under the following schemes. Kindly mention your phone (with STD Code)/Mobile Number positively in your letter.

Name of the Schemes	Donation (Part expenses)	* Corpus' fund for endowment
Lunch feeding (Samaradhana) to Vedic vidyarthi (Homely meals)	Rs. 700/=	Rs. 8,000/=
Dwadasis or Amavasya or Pournima (with Special meal) (Choose one specific day of a particular month in a year)	2,000/=	25,000/=
For Rice & Dhal : (75 Kgs)	1,500/=	16,000/=
For education : Vedas & Shastras - (Siksha/Rakshana) (Per Student)	12,000/= P.A.	1,30,000/= Lakhs

Donations by A/c payee crossed D.D./ Cheque may please be drawn in favour of A.V.M.S.G.D.P.S. Samithi, payable at Kumbakonam. (Please Correspond to the President & Treasurer to the above address)

Music and Spirituality: A New Perspective

Dr. T. V. Manikandan

ओं भद्रम् कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः
भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाँ सस्तुभिर्
व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥

-Shantipath of Upanishad

Thus says the Veda....It is an incantation and invocation to God, to harmonise the feeling and sentiments of human beings so that God is pleased to grant all auspicious things to mankind.

The Vedic mantra implies:- "Oh! The Almighty God, the Pranava, (*Om kara*) and the Glorious, (*Deva*) by your grace, may we listen to all those auspicious songs through our ears; Oh! Who are worthy of worship, may we see with our eyes, what is divine and auspicious, may we spend

our whole span of life singing your praise with our spiritually strengthened body, mind and senses?"

The weal and welfare of mankind lies in speaking auspicious and pleasant things; in hearing pious and holy music and metaphysical things that



Dr. T. V. Manikandan

still peace and bliss in the hearts; and in seeing similar things. This is the ambitious wish in the form of a prayer to God in all humility and piety for him.

Music is the only means to accomplish all these simultaneously. It alone has the merit of pleasing every being, whether it is a child, cattle or a serpent.

शिशुर्वेति पशुर्वेति
वेति गानरसं फणी ।

It is the richest heritage of mankind that has tremendous healing capacity, the rudeness of beings is smoothened and wildness of brutes is tamed and above all, life is made worth living and worth giving by the impact of music.

No surprise, music is advocated while milking the cows to extract more milk. The roughness of beings is softened by the magical impact of music. Therefore, it is always pleasant, pious and auspicious to the ear. Even to sing a kind and soft song affords bliss and peace to the mind, while seeing auspicious

things and feeling them in hearts of hearts is really a virtue. Whatever we feel in all glory and grandiose deemed happened in thought (*Bhavana*) if not in practice:-

यद्भावं तद्भवति ।

—*Taittiriya Upanishad* (2/7)
The *Prasannopanishad* says:-
रसो वै सः ।

Which is interpreted as "he is the soul and the soul in the embodiment of *rasa*". It affords Ananda, which is Prabrahma-The Supreme divinity by itself. So the *jeevathma* is described as the "*Ananda Swaroopa*" the personification of supreme happiness.

Saint Thyagaraja considered the supreme divine head as the "*Jagadananda karaka*".. and "*Omkara pancharakeera*" 'He' is the reason of the universal happiness, which is caged as a bird in the Omkara. The "*rasa*" is the bliss enjoyed by the soul.

It is only when the soul on its emancipation attains the divine pleasure, whereby rendering unalloyed devotional service, it

eternally enjoys the transcendental nectarine bliss as the Lord in 'Rasa' –

रसो वै सः ।

The very embodiment of nectarine bliss. This is the self knowledge which is the means for attaining immortality and finally all about 'Brahman'.

"Brahman" is *rasa*, the one who has comprehended this bliss of Godhead is immersed in felicity and drinks the nectarine mind flows from him. Nothing attracts a pure mind than the bliss of Lord Krishna, who is the "*Akhila rasamrutha moorthy*", the transcendental embodiment of all aesthetical bliss.

So *rasa* is identified only with him and occupies the apex. This supreme power is the fountain

Nothing attracts a pure mind than the bliss of Lord Krishna, who is the "*Akhila rasamrutha moorthy*", the transcendental embodiment of all aesthetical bliss.

source of all *rasa* and its myriad manifestations. Any amount of knowledge is futile when it is devoid of *rasas*. It is the tinge or thirst for enjoyment that qualifies the human beings as such. Thus *rasa* is the chief trait of the human beings, and it is the source of Ananda.

Closely connected to the concept of *rasa* is the *pranava...Omkara...* it is a mystical and magical sound pregnant with tremendous power. One should concentrate upon this syllable "*Aum*"-the *udgitha*, with an adoring mind, with fervour of spirit and with purity of soul to reach the supreme God.

The beings are enlivened by the substance of earth; the earth derives its essential substances from water, again the plants get food from water, the corporal body is sustained by the substance of the plants; the function of speech is the essential faculty or activity of human beings.

Again among all the spoken sounds 'Rik'-sound is the glory

of speech; the 'Saman'-is the crest jewel of "Rik" and among "samchants", 'aum' is the paramount esoteric aspect. Therefore, 'aum' is the substratum of everything that exists.

It is said that, 'Aum' is the transcendental sound that descends from that transcendental plane to the conditioned soul.

Therefore, *Rik* is speech, and the *Samann* is the Prana -life. *Udgita* is the 'aum'. It amounts to say that, if the speech is not used for chanting the glory of God, it is equal to the sound of a frog, which invites its enemy-snake, by its sound. Saint Thyagaraja preached nothing except the knowledge of music devoid of *Bhakthi* which does not serve the purpose of music i.e. salvation. Because salvation is the ultimate aim and music as a

faculty of speech is the means to achieve it.

It is interesting to study the manifold aspects of *rasa* as latent in music and literature as extended to almost all languages in the world.

Many musicians and *vaggeyakaras* (lyricist singers) echoed their innate urge for divine grace and salvation in their musical compositions. *Vaggeyakaras* like Jayadeva, Soordas, Kabir, Annamama-charya, Narayanateertha, Ramadasa, Thyagaraja, Sadasiva Brahmendra, Purandaradasa and others are unanimous in their approach to divinity in their musical compositions, praying for jeevanmukhthi.

Or salvation. However, they had some degree of differences in their philosophical approaches.■

SWEET THOUGHT

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**TALENTS KNOWS WHAT TO
DO : TACK KNOWS HOW TO
DO IT.**

- Dryden

Prakasam Pantulu: **An Eminent Journalist**

R. Ekambaracharyulu

Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu was a versatile genius. A popular barrister in the Madras High Court, a patriot who joined the nationalist movement, viz, the nonviolent, noncooperation started by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, a popular Congress leader, Chief Minister of Madras Province in 1946 and the first Chief Minister of Andhra State formed in 1953, Prakasam was the eminent editor of the famous English daily, "*The Swaraj*" for 13 long years. He was not only a popular leader but a famous editor of newspapers.

Prakasam was editor of the famous "*Madras Law Times*" from 1912 to 1921 besides stints as editor of the "*Village Republic*" in Telugu, Tamil and English languages from 1940 to

1942 and "*Praja Patrika*" during 1952-53 after establishing the Peoples' Party popularly known as "*Praja Party*".

The "*Madras Law Times*" essentially dealt with the problems of the legal profession. As Editor of "*Madras Law Times*", he fought for the



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protection of lawyers' rights and to correct irregular methods adopted by judges.

As Editor of "*Village Republic*" Prakasam took steps to awaken people for village reconstruction. It gave importance to cottage industries, Khadi and exchange of goods. The "*Village Republic*" and "*Village Swarajya*" were published in Telugu, Tamil and English. While Prakasam was interned in jail, these papers were edited by Sri Nanikonda Satyanarayana Sastry.

Another paper edited by Prakasam was "*Praja Patrika*" which bitterly criticized defects in the Congress rule after the dawn of Independence, exposing the results of Congress misrule, the unethical methods crept in

the administration, partiality displayed. This paper made sincere efforts for the formation of a separate state for Andhra and for solving the problems related to Andhras. It folded up after the formation of Andhra State in 1953.

"*The Swarajya*", the English daily started by Prakasam Pantulu, spread his name and fame far and wide as a popular Editor and Journalist. The paper was started in 1921 after he gave up the legal profession and joined the freedom movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

Though resolutions were passed in the AP Congress session for starting a daily newspaper to highlight the Congress principles and to

support and propagate the noncooperation movement, no leader came forward to start any paper. Prakasam was bold enough to start *Swarajya* in 1921.

Shri C. Rajagopalachari named it as "*Swarajya*". The first copy of the paper was released on December 25, 1921 at the Broadway *Swarajya* office in Madras.

The aims and objectives of the paper were to write articles and publication of news supporting Gandhi's Non-cooperation movement, spread and popularisation of the principles of "Congress Party and to put the British rule to searching criticisms."

There were two English dailies in Madras prior to the establishment of *Swarajya*. The *Hindu* and The *Madras Mail*, The *Hindu* was a moderate paper and catered to the needs of Tamilians and gave less importance to Andhra news. The *Madras Mail* was run by the Britishers. Therefore Prakasam started *Swarajya* to highlight the problems and the needs of the

Andhraites.

With his bank balances and money collected in the form of shares and donations Prakasam established a joint stock company and started the daily *Swarajya* in 1921. He was the Managing Director and also the Chief Editor of the paper. Motilal Nehru, a frontline Congress leader and the father of Jawaharlal Nehru, purchased shares in this paper.

A new printing press purchased by Viswadaata Shri Kasinadhuni Nageswara Rao was handed over to Prakasam at the cost price.

The paper set high standards in the field of journalism right from the beginning till it was closed in 1935. The paper created sensation and awakening among South Indians. It won the affection of the people.

In the beginning it sold five thousand copies and the sales shot up to eight thousand in the second month. The statistical data indicates the love and affection showered by the people on it.

Though his mortal
remains are no more
today, he remains for
ever in the hearts of the
people for his
praiseworthy and
extraordinary services to
Andhra State.

Shri Chittaranjan Das,
influenced by Swarajya,
established "*The Liberty*" and
later *The Forward* in Calcutta.

The unlawful methods
adopted by the British rulers and
employees' misdeeds, secret
papers, police *julum*, misrule of
the Government and other
irregularities were bitterly
criticised and exposed in the
paper.

The editorials did not only
criticise the British rulers, but
their supporters. The news and
views expressed in the paper
created a big headache to the
British rulers and officers in
power. Not even a single day was
left without sensational news and
editorials. This paper toiled as

the representative of newspapers
and acted as a national paper.

Nobody dreamt that such a
popular paper that served the
cause of the people for 13 long
years would be closed suddenly.
Lack of sound financial position
was the main cause for its failure.
The other reasons were lack of
business acumen among its
organisers' inefficiency,
carelessness and lack of
sincerity. The collected
subscriptions were not properly
accounted for. Prakasam Pantulu
neither had the efficiency nor
time to conduct the paper on
sound lines added to its failure.

Though Prakasam collected
additional funds and
subscriptions, collected funds
from Telugus of South East Asia,
and even obtained funds by
mortgaging his properties which
were invested in the paper, he
could not save it. The paper was
permanently closed in 1935.

Shri Khasa Subba Rao, who
was on the editorial board right
from the beginning till its end
gave a graphic description of the
inner story of the paper in his

book titled "Men in the Lime Light". He described the glory and its fall in detail. He described that while the paper was under publication public gathered every day in groups at 3 p.m. at Swaraj office, Broadway to know and read the sensational news of that day.

Those who were on the Editorial Board during the 13 years period of its existence, later became famous and popular in the country as editors. They were Khasa Subba Rao, G. V. Krupanidhi, Kolavennu Ramakotiswara Rao, N. S. Varadarajan, G. V. Krishna Rao, C. Venkatappayya, K. Srinivasan, Kunduri Iswara Dutt, Kotamraju Rama Rao, Abdul Hamid Khan, Bh. S. P. Tyagarajan, Ramaswamy, Panditaradhyula Nageswara Rao, V. Bhaskaran et al. They

brought fame and reputation to this paper by their contributions.

K. M. Panikkar, who worked as professor in the Aligarh Muslim University and later became a popular political leader, for some years acted as Editor-in-charge of *Swarajya*.

Thus Prakasam Pantulu became famous as editor of four papers and in particular "The *Swarajya*" shone like a glittering star in the journalistic firmament for a number of years.

He was remembered by the Andhraites and Indians as a leader who served the cause of the people selflessly throughout his life. Though his mortal remains are no more today, he remains for ever in the hearts of the people for his praiseworthy and extraordinary services to Andhra State. ■

SWEET THOUGHT

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**A FOOL IS OFTEN AS
DANGEROUS TO DEAL WITH
AS A KNAVE AND ALWAYS
MORE INCORRIGIBLE.**

- Colton

New Poverty Economics

Prof. B. M. Hegde

"All sins cast long shadows."

Irish proverb

The big business with the money and employment that it generates is the talk of the town. Everyone who does well in business is the darling of the powers that be. In the monetary economy, it is the big business that runs the world. Money today has become our God and making money our religion.

But in this scenario it is the ethics that is usually the casualty. Money runs governments and politics. Banks, stock markets, governmental agencies that mentor these institutions and all other fringe activities are the ones that catch the attention of the media as well as the imagination of the younger generation.

The Forbes list of millionaires, the list of big spenders, and the list of the

glitterati occupy the main pages of the daily newspapers as also special papers devoted to business. Money is the oxygen that runs society today.

There runs a parallel economy of what is called black money which, at times, looks more powerful than the white money economy. These undesirable activities are associated with crime in various forms like the Mumbai carnage.

Time was when mankind enjoyed the sustenance economy of egalitarian distribution, unlike in the present monetary economy where a small minority holds the lion's share of the cake leaving a tiny bit for the large majority to survive. This gulf is widening by the day as the total wealth keeps going up all over the world. Business means profit. Big profit, in turn, has to disregard

ethics to a great extent. Big money always has some kind of crime behind it.

When once money comes in, respectability follows in society and no one bothers to find out the origin or the means that went into getting that money. In short, money also buys respectability. In this milieu, corruption is the natural by-product. This has become a universal phenomenon. Corruption is the shortcut to making it big in a short time. Naturally, then corruption can never be divorced from the other methods of making money. In this business of making money what matters is the end and not the means to the end.

Does money bring happiness with it? This million dollar question does not have a single simple answer. In the beginning, money would bring security and some degree of happiness, but with more money, happiness becomes a thing of the past. The who is who of the rich and the powerful shows that they all were unhappy to the extent of almost committing suicide

before they decided to part with substantial amounts of their wealth to society.

It is in giving that one gets happiness. The stories of John D Rockefeller, Alfred Nobel, and even Bill Gates Jr. are all similar if one went deep into them. They became happy only after giving and not getting. It is in giving that one gets happiness. It is greed that creeps in when one makes it big to destroy humanism. History is replete with examples of such incidents.

There seems to be an awakening of the human conscience in the field of big business after a number of

Corruption is the short cut to making it big in a short time. Naturally, then corruption can never be divorced from the other methods of making money. In this business of making money what matters is the end and not the means to the end.

There runs a parallel economy of what is called black money which looks more powerful than the white money economy.

scandals came up recently to show big business in very bad light. Students seem to be interested in business ethics and universities are keen to have special courses in business ethics. Professional ethicists and teachers teaching business ethics are in great demand.

This was the theme of the recent annual conference of business ethicists held in Atlanta. The participants thought that the boom will go on for sometime now.

Books written on business ethics are going up by the day and the present estimate is that over 500 are already in the market. The predictions of the future should go wrong and they did in this case as well. When Lehman Brothers collapsed followed by many other major players in the field, the world

stood up to take notice of what I have written above. Most of the Western governments are in disarray thanks to their putting their eggs together in the monetary system pegged to the US model. It will now take a lot of effort and time to recover from this mess.

Behind much of this claptrap is the continuing anger against the spate of corporate controversies, fraud investigations and allegations of wrong doing. In the news are WorldCom, Tyco, Health South, Rite Aid, Enron, Adelphia and many more!

Enron tops the list with conspiracy, fraud convictions of former chief Kenneth Lay and much more. Enron even took the biggest accounting firm of Arthur Anderson with it and the pensions of thousands of workers.

All these would pale into insignificance if one goes into the fraud that the large pharmaceutical houses have committed which has gone up exponentially in recent times resulting in adverse drug reactions being a significant

cause of death and disability.

The next tsunami will soon hit the pharma lobby that has been plundering the hapless common man for a ride what with their disease mongering techniques and their sales gimmicks. Imaginary diseases and the epidemics are created by them to sell drugs and make money. The medical profession is completely under their control.

The big pharma lobby, which today is thrice as big and powerful as the oil lobby in Washington, has been at it for a long time almost from the time the first sulpha molecule was extracted from naphtha to make money out of the surplus oil that was not being sold during the American depression in the 30s.

Some of the recent revelations in this area have made many of their skeletons tumble out of their cupboards. Reviewing this beautiful book *Overdosed America* by John Abramson wherein this practising doctor in the US has revealed the horrible stories of how drug companies create

illnesses to sell their drugs, how they even hoodwink the American licensing body, the FDA, how they control medical education, how they "doctor" research data to suit their convenience and, how they brainwash the medical profession to dance to their tunes. Eric Schlosser, wrote thus: "Some of the nation's worst drug dealers are not peddling on street corners; they are occupying corporate suites instead."

It is time we went back to the time honoured business ethics practised in India from time immemorial. About a decade ago, the BBC in London had put together a debate on ethics in business and other areas.

It was not surprising why they chose Tulsidas's *Rama Charitamaanasam* as the pivotal point for discussion. BBC claimed that this epic is the only one that depicts human ethics of the highest order where one could see the manliness of God and godliness of man at the same time. While Rama agrees to go for 14 years exile in the forests

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showing the manliness of God, Bharata, his younger brother, sees that Rama does not lose his legal right to the throne even after 14 years by ruling only as his power of attorney, displaying thereby godliness of man!

Big business should forget Bernard Mandeville who wrote that in corporate world there is no place for charity as the sole motto should be to make profit irrespective of the consequences.

Now that there is awareness in the world for a new business humanism in the aftermath of the recent economic tsunami, we better get the pharma lobby to

come clean and empty their cupboards of all the old skeletons atoning for their past sins before the next more powerful tsunami hits them. As there is now awareness among the students for the need for ethics of the highest order in business, business schools should wake up from their deep slumber. Hope with this change of heart big business will be able to build a healthy future for mankind with an egalitarian society where the lowest worker gets a reasonable salary and not one thousandth of the salary of the CEO!

Let all the people on the Forbes list take note that happiness is "rejoicing in giving" as proclaimed by the Isopanishad thus: *thena thyakthena bhoojnithaha*. Until the last person gets three meals a day, there will be no peace on earth. See what is happening in Mumbai – sheer madness. People do not have social consciousness or social conscience. May godliness prevail.

"Injustice never rules for ever," - Seneca ■

India Among Top Economies

Bhaskar Rana

The World Bank has declared that India has officially become one of the world's largest economies, claiming tenth place in the league table of top global financial players. Massive industrial growth combined with increasing investment from Western companies has elevated the Asian giant from 12th place into tenth, just behind Spain, Canada and China.

It is now worth \$692bn (£393bn), and fuelled by an economic growth spurt of 7 per cent over the last two years, has overtaken traditional rivals Korea and Mexico. Its tenth place position dictates that world economic leader, the United States, firmly dominates the top five slots and leaves a host of

European nations, including the UK, jockeying for mid-table positions.

Emerging economies are smaller than the developed countries – but they are growing faster and opening up, leading to greater investment opportunities than ever before.

There are two methods of GDP calculation: nominal GDP attempts to compare countries using current exchange rates to give an assessment of their clout within the global market.

Purchasing Power Parity or PPP GDP, on the other hand, tries to take into account that one dollar can buy more in some countries and less in others. It is a better gauge of the internal size of each market.

By definition, purchasing

power parity (PPP) is an economic theory that estimates the amount of adjustment needed on the exchange rate between countries in order for the exchange to be equivalent to each currency's purchasing power.

INDIA is the one of the world's fastest growing economies, yet its annual per capita income remains quite low at \$950, or about Rs 40,000. That puts India in the 160th spot. Its gross domestic product stands at \$1.171 trillion. However, in terms of purchasing power parity, India is the world's fourth largest economy. Its GDP in purchasing power parity terms is at \$3.092 trillion.

The World Bank has declared that India has officially become one of the world's largest economies, claiming tenth place in the league table of top global financial players.

India accounts for just over 2 per cent of global GDP and has a relatively entrepreneurial culture. It requires government effectiveness and the tackling of corruption. India has an exceptionally weak score in commercialising new ideas via entrepreneurship, a factor which the index identifies as a major contributor to growth. India's score in terms of entrepreneurship is surprisingly better than Austria at 2 and Canada at 14. It, however, is doing a lot in terms of commercialising innovation.

USA: Incidentally, World Bank figures show that the world's GDP is at \$54.347 trillion. The American GDP is at \$13.812 trillion, making it the world's largest economy. It accounts for over 25 per cent of the entire world's GDP! In terms of purchasing power parity too, the United States is the world's leading economy. However, its per capita income at \$46,040, per year, pegs it at the 15th spot in the world.

JAPAN with a GDP of

\$4.377 trillion, is the world's second largest economy. However, in terms of purchasing power parity, Japan is ranked third by the World Bank. Its GDP in PPP terms is \$4.283 trillion. Japan's per capita income (annual) is \$37,670, making it the 25th highest in the world.

GERMANY is the world's third largest economy, with its GDP at \$3.297 trillion. But in PPP terms, Germany is the world's fifth largest economy. Its GDP in PPP terms is at \$2.752 trillion. Its per capita income is the 23rd highest in the world, at \$38,860.

CHINA the Asian giant, is the world's fourth largest economy with a GDP of \$3.281 trillion; but in purchasing power parity terms it ranks second at \$7.055 trillion. It is the world's fastest growing major economy and its giant strides have taken the world by a storm. Economists predict that over the next few decades, it could topple the US as the world's largest economy. China's per capita income, however, is still low at \$2,630 per

year.

The Chinese economy still has many elements of state control and lacks some crucial legislative frameworks such as IP protection.

UK: Britain is the world's fifth largest economy. Its GDP is at \$2.728 trillion. In purchasing power parity terms, the United Kingdom's GDP stands at \$2.082 trillion making it the seventh largest in the world. Britain is a rich nation. Its per capita income is at an impressive \$42,740. That would rank it in the 19th spot.

FRANCE's GDP is at \$2.563 trillion, making it the world's sixth largest economy; but in terms of PPP, it is the world's 8th largest (GDP in PPP terms, \$2.054 trillion). The per capita income of the French at \$38,500 makes them the 24th richest people in the world.

ITALY's GDP in absolute terms is at \$2.107 trillion. That makes it the planet's seventh largest economy. However, in purchasing power parity terms its GDP is at \$1.780 trillion and its rank is 10th. Italians' per capita

income at \$ 33,540 is the 30th highest in the world. Italy has been called the 'Sick Man of Europe' after growth stalled in 1999.

SPAIN is the eighth largest economy with its GDP at \$1.429 trillion. In purchasing power parity, however, it slips to the 11th spot (\$1.373 trillion). With a per capita income of \$29,450 per year, its people are the 36th richest in the world. Spain is suffering from some fundamental economic problems such as its vast trade deficit, lower competitiveness and higher inflation.

CANADA: The Canadian GDP stands at \$1.326 trillion, making it the world's ninth largest economy. In PPP terms, however, it stands 14th in the world. Its GDP in PPP terms is at \$1.178 trillion. Its people enjoy a comfortable life with a per capita income of \$39,420, which is 22nd highest in the world.

BRAZIL: The Brazilian economy too has been growing at a scorching pace. It is the world's 10th largest economy

with a GDP of \$1.314 trillion. But in terms of purchasing power (GDP - \$1.834 trillion), it is better placed at number 9. Among the emerging economies, it has one of the best per capita income figures — \$5,910—the 85th spot in the world.

RUSSIA: In GDP terms, Russia — at \$1.291 trillion — is the world's 11th largest economy, but it jumps to the 6th spot in terms of purchasing power parity (\$2.088 trillion). Its per capita income is at \$7,650, the 78th highest in the world.

Goldman-Sachs has done an updated BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, China) economic projection up to 2050 and revised their earlier estimations. By then, the US will have dropped to number three, overtaken by China in the lead followed by India.

"Productivity growth will help India sustain over 8% growth until 2020 and become the second largest economy in the world, ahead of the US, by 2050, Goldman Sachs has said, scaling up estimates of the

country's prospects in its October 2003 research paper widely known as the BRICs report. By contrast, emerging economies such as India and China have growth rates of around 8% to 11%, while the 'new' emerging economies may experience even more blistering growth rates.

Developed countries have already reached a saturation point, and thus expand less than emerging economies, where possibilities and opportunities are ripe, investors are ready to take risks, and consumers are demanding more goods and services than ever before.

Key factors determine a country's economic ranking including the business environment, infrastructure, tax rates, and the general ease of operations within that country.

The world's top ten economies can be determined by examining factors such as growth prospects, business environments, infrastructure, educational levels of the citizens, and governmental policies and institutions.

Perhaps the most authoritative ranking is the Global Competitiveness Report. It is produced in conjunction with the World Economic Forum, and captures both the perceptions of thousands of business leaders and statistical analysis by academics at universities and think tanks worldwide.

Indeed, it includes the WEF's Global Competitiveness Index, developed by Professor Martin at Columbia University, and the Business Competitiveness Index, developed by Professor Porter at the Harvard Business School. ■

SWEET THOUGHT

Sri Krishna Sweets

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**IT IS BETTER TO DESIRE THE
THINGS WE HAVE THAN TO
HAVE THE THINGS WE
DESIRE.**

- Henry Van Dyke

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Admissions open for class IV to VIII & XI (C.B.S.E. Syllabus)

IV

**Why Pluck Only Berries From Trees
When You Can Pluck Stars Off The Sky?**

How Can We Negate Effects of Negative Comparison?

P. N. Santhanagopal*

We can effectively negate the effect of negative comparison through comparison of the positive kind.

Begin by comparing yourself with other creatures that share this earth with you. You can think. They cannot. They can, at best, only feel.

Compare yourself with people who spend their entire lifetime on pavements and have to go hungry to bed almost every other day.

Compare yourself with those who are sick or are handicapped.

The whole situation takes a dramatic turn, does it not,

when you realise that in many ways you are much more fortunate than millions of other people on earth?

But then our ancient sages tell us that comparison of any kind, either negative or positive, is wrong and unnecessary because possessions or their absence make a difference only in your mind.

Our ancestors who lived four or more generations before us, people who belong to our past, were also persons who had their hopes and aspirations and expectations and desires. They lived their lives and have faded away into the past.

**Joint Director, Central Bhavan.*

Do we remember them? They have gone away, without leaving a trace. Our link remains with them only because we still carry their genes in our blood. Neither us nor the world, know anything about them.

We do not remember them because, like us, they too had lived their lives, merely going through the act of being alive.

There were, however, some people who lived much earlier than these ancestors of ours. They had made great contributions and have bequeathed them to posterity. The teachings of Adi Sankara B h a g a v a d p a d a , R a m a n u j a c h a r y a , V a l l a b h a c h a r y a , Madhvacharya, Gautama Buddha, Mahaveera, for instance, are vibrantly alive and continue to make an impact on life even today. How simple was their mode of living. Yet how profound are their relevant teachings.

Think of Michael Faraday who is still remembered as

Father of Chemistry; of Madame Curie who discovered Radium; Copernicus who declared that the earth went around the sun when entire Europe believed that the sun revolved around earth and earth was flat.

These great contributors to human knowledge and wisdom lived very simple lives. Compared to them each one of us is having a much better lifestyle. Yet can we ever match their contributions or their achievements?

How radically different are the times of our ancestors of ancient times and we of this twenty first century. We belong to the times of tremendous technological and scientific achievements.

They were the people who, in spite of their simple living, were closer to nature, trusted and nurtured it and Mother Nature gladly gave them everything in limitless abundance.

They were the people who through contemplation alone

had sensed the oneness of entire cosmic existence and had cognised eternal and fundamental values. They were the rishis and they soared up and moved among the stars. We are, however, tied down to things that tie us down, and we choose to remain that way grovelling in ignorance in spite of possessing oceans of information.

We must realise all the so called problems that we face are due to the fact that we ourselves draw a line around ourselves, set fire to the circle and cower in fear and dread inside it! We can come out of this circle by merely walking out of the circle. The fear of fire is only in our minds. When once we expand our minds embracing the entire cosmos, all limitations vanish.

The great Sankaracharya reverentially hailed as Adi Sankaracharya was a sanyasi. He had given up everything. He sought alms only to appease his hunger. He once asked for alms at a hut. Its

occupant was an old lady, shrivelled up by poverty and penury. Yet when she saw a monk at her door seeking alms, she searched and found a dried and shrivelled nut which she offered to him. Moved by her pitiable condition Sri Sankara composed his famous *Kanaka dhara stotram* and immediately gold coins started raining down the broken down and dilapidated roof of the lady's hut.

To Sankaracharya the dried nut was more precious than the gold that he offered her because of the attitude of the old lady. Sankaracharya could have created immense wealth for himself if only he had wanted. He did not because to him there was no difference between a diamond and a piece of rock. Both, he knew, were made of only empty space!

Sanyasa, however, is a stage of life that is meant only for those who have ascended the spiritual ladder and have

already gone beyond all bondages.

Placed as we are, we have our duty or dharma and that is to create wealth. When you create wealth for yourself you are lost. It will engulf you. You have to create wealth only for the purpose of meeting your obligations towards your parents, your spouse, children, community, people and the Nation. While doing so, you are certainly within the confines of Dharma if you use the facilities that you create for others.

You cannot create wealth by wishing for it or by waving a magic wand. You have to acquire skills which you should continue to hone at all times. You should create in yourself the capacity and inclination to work. In fact you should enjoy working. Only then will you not consider your work to be a chore or burden.

Remove the Mental Blocks

You can do so by being

imaginative, creative and you are filled with curiosity, a spirit of adventure and discovery. When once you have made up your mind to become a dynamo instead of being a motor, things will begin to change instantly. You will find your self becoming creative. Your mental horizon will expand and keep on expanding. You will then discover that things begin to happen.

Earlier we had made a reference to the limitless abundance of nature, which belongs to every creature that shares the space on earth with mankind.

This natural wealth can be drawn on by any one. This can be done provided you remain in resonance with Nature. When you are tuned in properly, the boundless energy of nature will begin to flow in. A person can tune in to nature only through spiritual means. Spiritual energy will begin to flow and energise you and empower you when:

*You help those who need

to be helped, without expecting anything in return.

*When you ensure that your actions and thoughts do not harm or cause

*unhappiness or pain to any other person you come in to contact, at any time, anywhere.

Shift your entire focus on living by making these two important and vital guidelines and you will find tremendous energy and confidence filling up every cell in your body and spiritual power will radiate out of your person.

"Show me a person without ego and I shall show you a boneless wonder," said a humorist. It is true. From the most powerful and mighty to the meek, practically every person carries a weight and that weight is ego. The inexorable law of Nature is that even if you have ego of the size of an electron, you

cannot draw upon its limitless energy and bounty. When you drop your ego totally, you become humble and receptive. Only in that state knowledge will begin to pour into you. Only in that state can you convert the knowledge that flows into wisdom. And when



you possess wisdom you possess everything. A person of wisdom is richer than the richest and happiness, contentment and tranquility brim out of him.

But most of us cling to our egos like a cat that has climbed up to the top branch of a tree clings to the branch. It fiercely

**Throw Away the Weight You Carry and Begin to Fly-
The Weight You Carry is Your Ego!**

clings to the branch because it does not know how to climb down, not realising that it has to release the branch in order to get down to the ground.

The incredible thing is that a cat always lands on all its fours no matter from what height it falls. What is more, its claws can grip the bark of a tree so well that it can easily climb down but the cat does not realise that it can. It firmly believes that it has to stay up there to be safe.

Like the cat we too are trapped by our belief system. We too can instantly shed our ego but do not do it because we believe the picture our ego paints for us to be true.

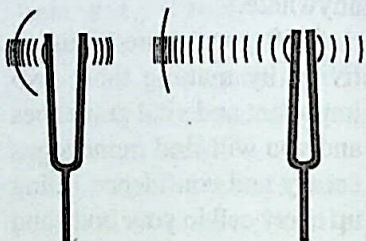
How does dropping your ego help? When you become humble, the gap between you and spiritual power also gets greatly reduced.

When you are really humble you will become respectful even towards a worm. You will concede readily that it too has a right to exist and to its way of life

and to its quantum of happiness.

You have to resonate with Nature as explained earlier, if you are to draw upon its limitless energy.

Let us understand what resonance is:



If you have two identical tuning forks and if you hit one of them with a hammer, it will begin to vibrate and hum. When it does, you will notice that the other tuning fork also begins to vibrate and hum.

This happens because of resonance. Similarly, when you resonate with Nature, you will begin to be in tune with it and its boundless energy will then begin to stream into you. ■

(To Be Continued)

Whatever is Not Used Will Atrophy

T. G. L. Iyer, IPS (Retd.)*

Reverend Charles W. Shedd says: "Three minutes of anger saps your strength, quicker than eight hours of work. It puts terrific strain on the body. When one is angry, blood rushes to the major muscles of arms and legs. And the brain lacking its full blood supply is cut down in efficiency. That is one reason you say things you do not mean and do things, which seem outlandish.

We all know that many of our ailments come from negative attitude, hate, envy, resentment and frustration. We can recover from such sickness by substituting patience for impatience, calmness for anger, love for hate, acceptance instead of resentment and optimism instead of frustration. Why surrender to bad habits? That only helps to fasten the habit

upon us.

Mary Martin, the Broadway Star says: "Every time you get into an argument, you have a small chance of boosting your ego and softening the opposition but a big chance of losing a friend and hardening an artery".

Go out of the way to avoid discordant situations. For this self-analysis helps because you are undertaking a journey to discover yourself bringing out your potential for optimum utilisation and consequent results.

Many people try various methods to get over anger. One says: "Count upto hundred or go out into the open and wander about for some time or look at the mirror and laugh at yourself". Another says: "Jump into the pool and swim for sometime or bite an apple and consume it, or

** Director, Bhavan's Nagpur Kendra*

When one is angry, blood rushes to the major muscles of arms and legs. And the brain lacking its full blood supply is cut down in efficiency. That is one reason you say things you do not mean and do things, which seem outlandish.

shout into open space where there is no one and return back calm and satisfied”.

The price of temper is high, which most of us can't afford. Embittering life, breaking up communities, destroying sacred relationships, destroying peace at homes or withering men and women, for sheer misery-producing power, there is no other tool like anger, temper, whatever you may call it. Spirituality is one weapon, which can cool down temper and make the person move into a realm of calmness, stillness and serenity.

Florence Chadwick began her epoch-making swim from Catalina Island to Los Angeles

across a channel noted for its treacherous undertow, its tricky currents and heavy pull of tides. Fourteen hours later she reached the coastline and an estimated fifty million television viewers saw her defying the sea, holding her breath, never dithering or trying to give up. In the end she said: “Winners never quit; Quitters never win. Don't ask me how I knew that I will make it. I have just known all along that when the right moment came, I would be here and would make it to the other side”.

To some people success produces nothing but the fear of failure. It is a curse. If we are successful, we should be able to sit back and enjoy it. Success is rarely gained without setbacks. I remember learning cycling, falling down several times, hurting myself but never thought of giving it up. My friend started learning cycling with me, fell down once, and never learnt the art during his complete lifetime.

A woman shopper was strolling down the main road to her parked car with a stack of

heavy packages. Her steps were unsteady. A well-dressed gentleman appeared from nowhere and offered to carry them to her car. With great hesitation she gave the packages to him. He confidently led her to her car, put the packages inside, made her sit in the driver's seat, paid her parking meter and disappeared into the crowd without a word. Luckily, his visiting card had fallen on the top of the pile. When she telephoned and expressed her gratitude, the man replied: "Your words are like honey to me as it is my business to help hapless people who need it".

Excess of anything weakens the spirit. A Samurai does not clutter his life with many possessions nor does he waste anything. He says: "Practice economy not out of financial need, but discipline in small things builds strength of character.

Confusion, conflict, addiction and feelings of powerlessness come from excessive self-indulgence, which dissipates our

vital energy. Wanting many things takes us away from the centre, undermining our strength. Therefore, remove clutter, create space, clear the mind and give enough room to breathe.

Carl Jung wrote: "The dynamic principle of fantasy is *play* which belongs also to the child and appears to be inconsistent with the principle of serious work. But without this playing with fantasy, no creative work has ever yet come to birth". Consider work as play and focus to score in work at the first opportunity. My boss used to leave office in the middle of work, play tennis, get refreshed and reinvigorated and complete what he was doing at double the speed. Unfortunately, several people under pressure of work and driven by desire to achieve quick results, take the shortcut and land up in areas and territories which are unfamiliar, strange, and barren.

We all have power but sometimes, do not know how to use it! ■

Amazing Health Facts

Blood Pressure and Myths on Fitness and Sleep

K. Janakiraman

One of the main causes of high blood pressure is incorrect breathing.

More often, it is the result of reaction to situations. One can rightly say that the state of the mind at that particular point of time is responsible for the pressure shooting up.

Stress: What is stress? It is a constraining influence on physical, mental and emotional states. It is not to be confused with tension or strain. Stress requires not stern stuff but simple steps to be taken for removal.

Some Suggestions

1. Take a few deep breaths.
2. Fold the tongue as a tube, close the mouth and exhale through the nose 8 times chanting the mantra, 'Namah Parvathy Pathaye Hara Hara

Sambho Mahadeva'.

3. Divert the mind and allow it to woolgather.

4. In interaction with others use euphemism for all unpleasant words.

5. Sometimes stress is caused by pulmonary embolism or clots in the blood vessels or respiratory cavities. Complete relaxation through yoga seems to be the unfailing answer – a fact endorsed by the science of medicine.

Some Fitness Myths:
Having eight hours sleep may appear a healthy phenomenon but less than 25% of the world population could say that they have this much sleep.

Anxiety, pain and anguish, problems of the next day, renal and urinal disorders, such as

While exercise is not a panacea, it has consistently been shown to relieve both depression and anxiety.

enlargement of the prostate, could put a spoke in the wheel. It is claimed that those who meditate require not more than 4 hours sleep. They may not have rosy cheeks but they lead a tranquil life.

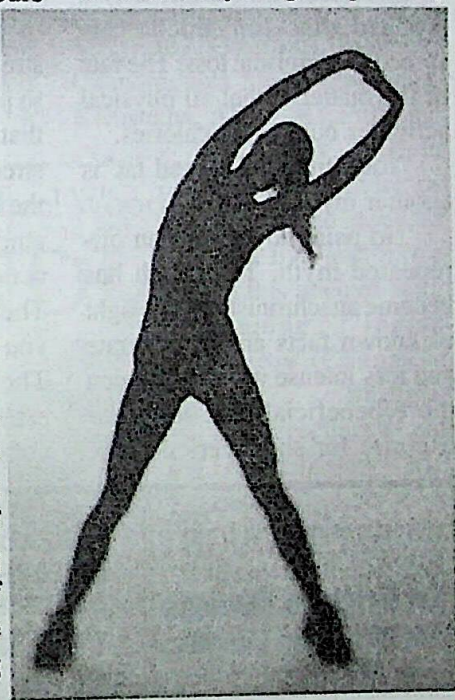
'Spot reduction by concentrating on the abdomen and hip with machines will reduce the waistline is another myth'. Such exercises only tone and strengthen these muscles.

'Exercise is a fabulous way to lose weight' is another myth. William Evans of the University of Arkansas says: 'Exercising does not burn a lot of calories. Walking a mile burns 100 calories. Sitting still burns 50 calories!

The reality is, the more you exercise, the more fit you get. The better conditioned you are, the more fat you burn because your muscles adapt to using an enzyme that oxidizes fat.

While exercise is not a panacea, it has consistently been shown to relieve both depression and anxiety.

Conclusion: 'Weight gain is inevitable as you age' is probably



the most popular view. Again I state that it is found to be a myth. It is only a matter of reduced physical activity levels and lower metabolic rate that cause overweight. With the loss of lean body mass the basal metabolic rate goes down. The percentage of body fat gradually increases. Fat cells burn fewer calories than muscle cells.

Exercise can mount a two pronged attack on 'middle age spread' and muscle loss. The fact of the matter is that all physical activities burn more calories.

'You cannot be fit and fat' is another myth.

'No pain, no gain' is an oft-repeated myth. This myth has become anachronistic in the light of known facts about moderate and less intense work outs being more beneficial than vigorous exercise for short periods. The

less said about it the better. Thirty minutes of moderate activity ensures lower blood sugar, triglycerides, and blood pressure' says Mr. Haskell of Stanford University.

Anaerobic exertion is when energy is produced without the use of oxygen.

High intensity and short duration work outs like sprinting are in this class. Lungs work hard to get oxygen into the blood stream. Heart should pump well to push the blood to the muscles that have to be operating at full stretch to take up oxygen from the blood. VO₂ is the maximum amount of oxygen a person can consume per lb of body weight. The larger your VO₂, the fitter you are. It increases with fitness. The key to fitness success is establishing a regular routine, consistency and moderation. ■

SWEET THOUGHT

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**PEDANTRY CRAMS OUR
HEADS WITH LEARNED
LUMBER, AND TAKES OUT
OUR BRAINS TO MAKE
ROOM FOR IT.**

- Colton

Book Review

Michael Wood – The Story of India

B.B.C. Books Random House,
London, 2007, pp.319.

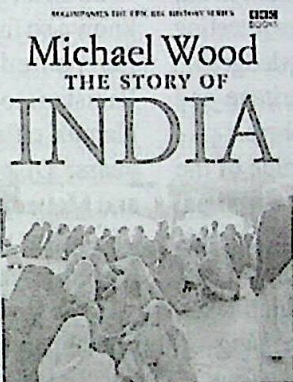
Dr. P. R. Dubhashi*

Michael Wood's story of India makes fascinating, even enchanting reading. Wood is a British historian (also a documentary maker) but he is not one of those Britishers still singing the glory of Imperial India. He has profound respect for India's culture, which has evolved over thousands of years, and genuine love for the human and humane qualities of the common Indian people.

This is not a dry as dust narration of historical events. In this book, history comes alive.

The great Indians who have left their giant footprints on the sands of time, Gautam Buddha, Chandragupta Maurya, Ashoka, Kanishkha, Akbar, Rajaraja, the Chola king, all seem to appear before us in flesh and blood, as they live and move on this ancient land, shaping Indian history (Chanakya and Shivaji, Sankaracharya and Dyaneshwar are missing).

So do come alive the classic ancient Indian cities, Hastinapur, the capital of Mahabharata, the holy city of



* *Chairman, Bharatiya Vidya
Bhavan, Pune Kendra.*

Banaras (Varanasi), Ayodhya (of Lord Ram), Mathura (of Lord Krishna), Prayag (the confluence of Ganga and Yamuna), Pataliputra (Patna), capital of the Mauryas and Madurai (the great seat of Tamil culture), cities with their quintessential Indian atmosphere.

Wood is able to achieve this astonishing feat because he has not written his history by simply poring over tonnes of books and manuscripts in libraries. He has combined cultural tourism with writing the story of India. He has spent days at these places, meeting with local people, knowledgeable about their cultural heritage and absorbing their atmosphere.

What adds to the value of the book is the attempt to incorporate the findings of the recent archeological exploration not known till recently, which takes the history of the making of Indian civilisation several centuries back. He met Prof. Pitchappan, genesist of Madurai, to know about his extraordinary discovery about the ancient genetic heritage of India which

he made while working among the Kollar tribal people linking to the waves of migration of people out of Africa.

He visited Kerala to understand the layers of human culture in India. In Kerala, he watched, the performance of Aryan rituals with recitation of *mantras* preserved by the Namboodri Brahmins zealously over thousands of years. He visited the sites explored by the French archeologist in Baluchistan, which go back to 7000 B.C., millennia earlier than known so far in the subcontinent. He visited Harappa (now in Pakistan) to see the sites of well-planned cities going back to 5000 years. Discoveries of Harappa and Mahenjo Daro traced history of India to 3000 B.C. thus preceding the pyramids of Giza.

The great war in epic poem Mahabharata of 100,000 verses, the largest poem in the world, took Indian history back 5000 years. He finds that the lost river, Saraswati (river of lakes) was real and was an important centre of civilisation in the Bronze Age.

He describes Rigveda as the first text of Indian history – perhaps world history, whose thousand hymns were passed on through oral transmission from generation to generation.

Wood also traces the new discoveries of Central Asia (Gonur Tepe in Turkmenistan) where were found the remains of horses and wheeled vehicles and mudbrick fire altars of shapes and designs used in Vedic rites in India as also the twiggy mountain plant, the source of the Rigveda Soma Rasa.

Wood distills the essence of India when he describes it “as a cosmos of humanity with all its diversity but still its basic unity”. This is the hallmark of Indian identity. Indians should not sacrifice it at the altar of today’s unfortunate caste and community conflicts deliberately fostered through competitive politics.

India’s tradition is of assimilation rather than confrontation. Dara Shikoh, the eldest son of Shah Jahan and his legitimate successor was in this great tradition. He was educated

in the religious texts of both Hinduism and Islam. With the help of Pandits from Benaras, he translated the Gita and some of the Vedic hymns into Persian under the title, “The Great Secret”. It is the tragedy of Indian history that Aurangzeb, his treacherous and cruel brother seized the throne of Delhi after imprisoning his father and mercilessly killing his three brothers including the broadminded Dara. This event was a great blow to the tradition of tolerance and broad-mindedness. The partition of India when India attained freedom must be traced to this tragic turn of Indian history.

Wood leaves the last word to the 14th century Indian poet Amir Khusro. He was a Muslim, who wrote in Persian and his ancestry was Turkic but he counted himself the luckiest man alive to have been born in India (echoing the Sanskrit words *Durlabha Bharate Janma*) and to have India as his motherland.

Said Amir Khusro –
“How exhilarating the

atmosphere of India.
There cannot be a better
teacher than the way of life
of its people.
If any foreigner comes by, he
will have to ask for nothing.

Because they treat him as
their own.
Play an excellent host and
win his heart
And show him how to smile
like a flower. ■

Books Just Released

Aspects in Vedic astrology: By: Pandit Gopesh Kumar, and Pandit Ashutosh Ojha, Reprint: 2008; First Indian Edition: Delhi, 2003; Ix-183 p Rs.195; ISBN: 978-81-208-1928-3.

Until now, there has been no single work which deals comprehensively with the theory and delineation of aspects in Vedic Astrology. This book fills a void by providing a clear and concise treatment of the subject. The authors have drawn their material from the ancient and medieval classics of Vedic Astrology, preserving the wisdom of the sages as well as giving their readers a wealth of insight into how the ancient dictums may be applied to contemporary life.

PHALDEEPIKA : Bhavartha Bodhini - Translated by: Pandit Gopesh Kumar and Pandit Ashutosh Ojha, Reprint: 2008; First English Edition: Delhi, 2008; Ix-673, p, Rs.495, ISBN: 978-81-208-3340-1 (cloth), ISBN: 978-81-208-3341-8 (paper).

One of the best books on predictive astrology, it includes the essence of Parashar, Jaimini and many masters. A total of 450 Yogas of *Bhavartha Ratnakar* of Shri Ramanuja has been added to befit the title *Phaldeepika: Bhavartha Bodhini*. Its 28 chapters cover various topics: the characteristics, house divisions, strength of planets, career, various yogas, raja yogas, marriage, children, longevity, periodic influence of planets, the effect of transits and *ashtakvargas*. The 11th chapter exclusively deals with the nativity of women; the 22nd chapter gives the interpretations and calculation of the *kalachakra* dashes. This English edition also includes many horoscopes, tables and a glossary of Sanskrit and Hindi words. ■



chetana

Sankranti and Vasant Panchami

January is the time for flying kites, eating *til ke laddoos* and *pongal* and going on pilgrimages. Children and adults in some states fly kites around January 14. Kite flying is a favourite sport in which the young and the old participate happily.

Sankranti is celebrated by Maharashtrians while *pongal* is celebrated by southern states. The apparent movement of the sun into the northern hemisphere is called *uttarayan*.

January is also the time to celebrate Basant Panchami. It is a Hindu festival which heralds the arrival of spring season. 'Vasant' or 'Basant' means spring. It is also the day when Saraswati Puja is performed in North and Eastern parts of India.



There is no major Hindu scriptural story associated with Vasant Panchami. But in the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna says that 'Basant' is one of his forms.

Basant Panchami is

essentially a form of nature worship – welcoming the blossoming nature after the harsh winter.

Prayers are offered on the day to Goddess Saraswati (Goddess of Knowledge), Lord Surya (Sun God), Mother Ganga (Ganges) and Bhu Devi (Mother Earth).

Great prominence is given to yellow colour on the day as it signifies the ripening of fruits and crops. The mustard fields in North India bloom during this season. Yellow coloured mustard flowers dot the green fields. Deities in temples and houses are decorated with yellow coloured clothes. Similarly, yellow coloured food, sweets and fruits are distributed



to friends, neighbors and relatives. Yellow sweet rice is cooked and distributed on the day. In northern and eastern parts of India, Goddess Saraswati is worshipped by students and teachers. Children are also initiated into the world of learning on this day.



Similarly, people worship the ancestors on the day and Pitr Tarpan is also performed by some communities. It is also an important bathing day during the ongoing Magh Mela. ■

Tattoo

The word tattoo comes from the Tahitian tatu meaning 'to mark something'. Ritual and tradition have been factors in tattooing. In Borneo, women bore a symbol on their arms to denote their specific skills, whilst tattoos worn around the fingers and wrist warded off illness. Clan or society membership have also often been symbolised by tattoos throughout history.



In ancient Greece, the tattoo was used to mark spies while the Romans used the tattoo to mark slaves and criminals.

In western Asia, the Ainu people used tattoos to signify social status. In Japan it became a mark of religion. Dayak warriors who had 'taken a head' were signified by a tattoo on the hand.

The Polynesians used tattoos to denote status, tribal communities and rank. The

Danes, Saxons and Norse were often tattooed with their family crest.

In those days, tattooing was a slow and painful procedure, being completely done by hand. Now machines are used. By the start of the 20th century, tattooing was beginning to be viewed as sleazy.

Currently, tattooing is more popular than ever and is also more widely accepted as a part of our society. Tattooists are now considered 'fine artists'. Artists now combine more traditional art with their own flavour to create some truly stunning work.

Hygiene is also now a major consideration of any self-respecting tattooist. The changes that have occurred have today created a safe, artistic form of self-expression. ■



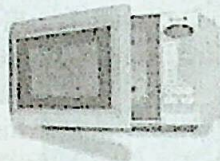
Simple Tips

*** Take Baby Powder To The Beach.** Keep a small bottle of baby powder in your beach bag. When you are ready to leave the beach, sprinkle yourself and kids with the powder and the sand will slide right off your skin.

***Reopening Envelopes.** If you seal an envelope and then realise you forgot to include something inside, just place your sealed envelope in the freezer for an hour or two. It unseals easily.

***Broken Glass.** Use a dry cotton ball to pick up little broken glass pieces of glass — the fibers catch ones you can't see, and spares your fingers.

***Reheating Refrigerated Bread.** To warm biscuits, pancakes, or muffins that were refrigerated, place them in a microwave with a cup of water. The increased moisture will keep the food moist and help it reheat faster. ■



OPEN HOUSE 36

Terrorists attacked Mumbai, killed people and destroyed CST station, Taj and Oberoi hotels recently

What can We do to Safeguard Ourselves against Terrorism?

Please send your ideas neatly typed or handwritten in about a hundred words to: **Open House-36,**

Chetana, Bhavan's Journal,
Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, K. M. Munshi Marg,
Chowpatty, Mumbai—400 007.

E-mail: bhavan@bhavans.info
All readers are welcome to express their views.



Nandana

STORY

THE TWELVE DANCING PRINCESSES

There was a king who had twelve beautiful daughters. They slept in twelve beds in one room and when they went to bed, the doors were locked up. However, every morning their shoes were found to be quite worn out as if they had been dancing in all night. Nobody could find out how it happened, or where the princesses had been.

So the king declared that if any person could discover where the princesses danced in the night, he would have the one he liked best as his wife, and be king after his death. But whoever did not succeed, after three days and nights, would be put to death.

Many princes and others tried their luck. They were entertained very well but fell asleep and could not find out where

the princesses went. They all lost their lives.

A soldier was travelling through a wood, and he met an old woman, who asked him where he was going.

‘I want to find out where the princesses dance, and then I might be king,’ said the soldier.

‘Don’t drink the wine which the princesses will give you; and pretend to be fast asleep,’ said

the old woman. Then she gave him a cloak, saying, 'When you put that on will become invisible.' Thanking her, he went to the king, and said he was willing to undertake the task.

He was as well received as the others had been. The eldest princess brought him a cup of wine; but the soldier threw it away secretly and pretended to snore loudly. When the twelve princesses heard this their fine clothes, and dressed themselves. They looked at the soldier; but he continued snoring.

The eldest went to her bed and clapped her hands, the bed sank into the floor and a trap-door flew open. They went down through the trap-door and he put on the cloak

and followed them.

They went on till they came to a lake; where twelve little boats with twelve handsome princes waited.

Each princess went into each boat. On the other side of the lake stood a fine castle from which came the merry music of horns and trumpets. There they landed, and went into the castle, and each prince danced with his princess till three o'clock in the morning. The princes rowed them back again and they took leave of each other, the princesses promising to come again the next night.

The soldier ran before the princesses, and laid himself down. And as the tired sisters came up, they heard him snoring and said, 'Now all is quite safe'.

In the morning the soldier said nothing but went again on the second and third nights. Everything happened just as before. On the third night the soldier took one golden cup as proof.

The king asked him, 'Where do my twelve daughters dance at night?'

The soldier answered, 'With twelve princes in a castle underground.' And then showed him the golden cup which he had brought with him.

The king asked the princesses and they confessed. The soldier chose the eldest and became the King's heir. ■

UNUSUAL HOBBIES

POOKTRE

Peter Cook and Becky Northey of Queensland, Australia have an unusual hobby which they call "Pooktre Art," which is the shaping of trees as they grow, in predetermined designs. They take living trees

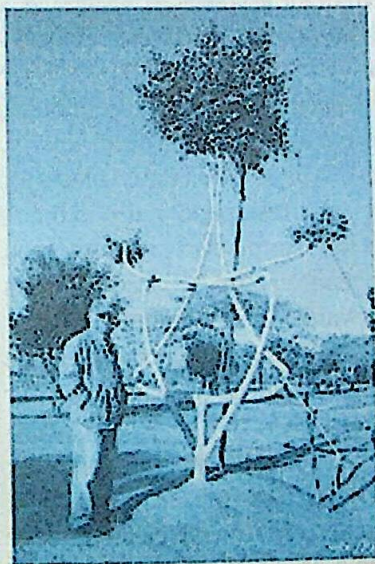


and 'train' them to grow into fantastic shapes. Because trees take years to grow,

it's a hobby that

requires

a lot patience. Some are intended for harvest to be high quality indoor furniture and others will remain living art.



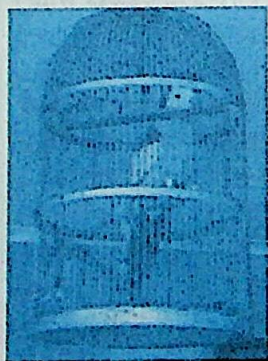
They live on a wild and beautiful 160-acre tree farm, but their hobby can be enjoyed — on a smaller scale — almost anywhere.

Sometimes they train trees to "become" something else. Here Peter poses with his chair tree. ■

PARROTS AS PETS

Parrots are often kept as pets, in particularly Conures, Macaws, Amazons, Cockatoos, African Greys, Lovebirds, Cockatiels, Budgerigars, Eclectus, and Parakeets.

They have the most varied colouration and are also known to imitate human speech or other sound, which can be very entertaining. The wings are clipped.



Parrots can be a great pet to keep - they are relatively low maintenance compared to a cat or dog, and can give you a lot of fun times.

The key thing to note is that parrots are social creatures and therefore you should spend lots of time with your parrot, don't leave them in the cage with no-one to talk to.



Ensure that their home is large enough, so that they can move around easily. Ensure also it is a nice comfy place for the parrot with fresh paper daily to line.

Parrots love simple bird toys which you can buy cheaply at the pet shop. Food is straightforward and can be bought ready made from pet shops, and of course ensure there is always plenty of water for your bird to drink.

The cage should be kept in good order by yourself on a daily basis - removing any mess and so on; overall clean the cage every couple of months. ■

Queen Beatrix Lauds Dhruba Ghosh

Shri Dhruba Ghosh, Principal, Bhavan's Sangeet and Natya Vidyalaya, participated in the Amsterdam-India Festival at Concertgebouw in Amsterdam on November 20, in the composition called, 'The Master's Tanpura' and it was selected for presentation with the Ensemble Modern of Frankfurt. This was premiered at the House of World Culture, Berlin in 2003. It is a concept of Shadja Swarain,

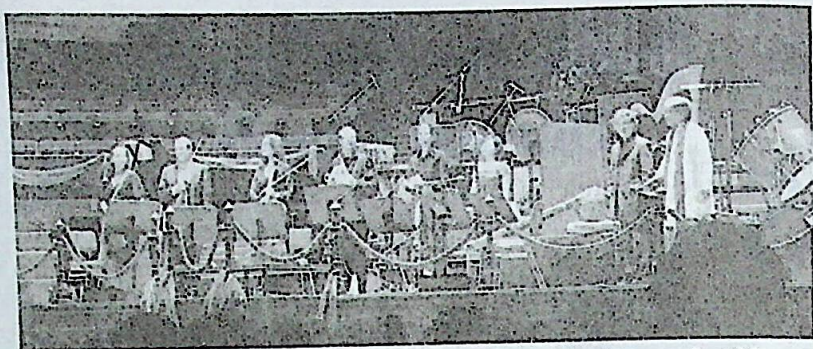
its various energy states ranging from subsonic levels right up to very complicated forms resulting in the notes emerging from it. The piece expresses the actual state of mind of the player and its ultimate destination expressed by the chanting of 'Aum Shanti Aum.'

Queen of the Netherlands, Beatrix, was the chief guest of the event. The 1000-seat auditorium was filled to capacity.

After the programme, the



**Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands chatting with
Shri Dhruba Ghosh at the reception she hosted.**



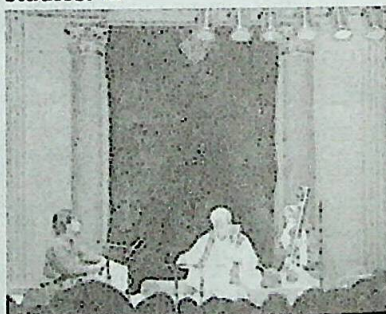
The performers rising to welcome Shri Dhruba Ghosh to conduct his composition, 'The Master's Tanpura'

Queen held a reception in honour of the composers and recalled her state visit to India in October 2007 and her impression of the sarangi recital of Shri Dhruba Ghosh which she had heard in Delhi. Her late husband was a great connoisseur of Indian music and could listen to music for several hours. Shri Dhruba Ghosh met the then Union Minister of Finance, Shri P. Chidambaram, who congratulated him on his performance.

On November 23, Shri Ghosh presented a sarangi solo recital in front of a distinguished audience of composers, musicians, musicologists and music directors from various

countries who spontaneously accorded him a standing ovation.

Later, he had conferences with eminent people, like representatives of the Music Conservatory of Vicentia, Italy and the Conservatory of Rotterdam who have expressed a wish to have active relation with Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan for studies. ■



Performance of classical sarangi by Shri Dhruba Ghosh

Recent Happening

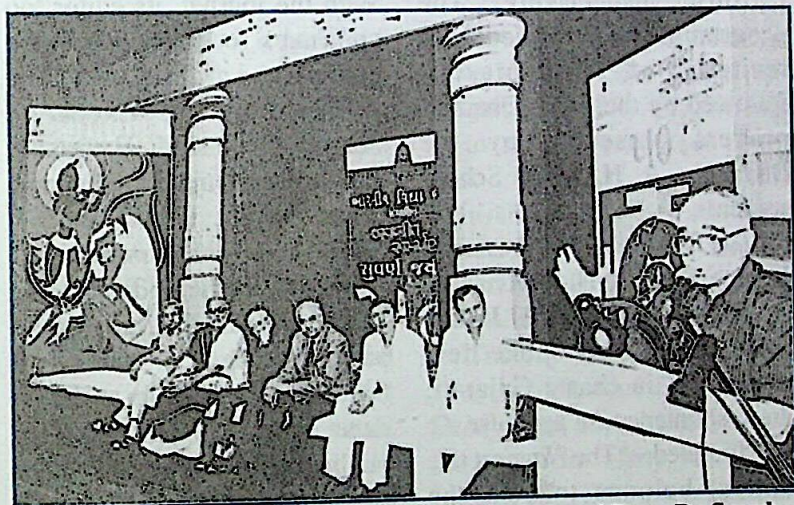
Golden Jubilee of Navneet Samarpan

Report by Shri Satish Vyas

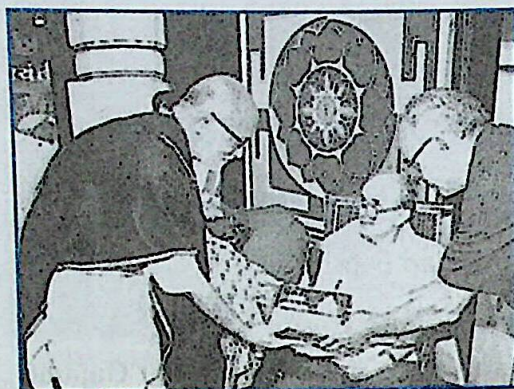
The Golden Jubilee of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's prestigious Gujarati monthly, "*Navneet Samarpan*" was celebrated on Saturday, November 15, 2008, at the Bhavan's Kanji Khetsey

Sabhagriha, Mumbai.

The well-known Gujarati litterateur and thinker, Shri Gunwant Shah, eminent Gujarati poet, Dr. Suresh Dalal and renowned exponent of the Ramayana, Puja Morari Bapu,



(From left to right) Shri Gunwant Shah, Shri Morari Bapu, Dr. Suresh Dalal, Justice Shri B. N. Srikrishna, Shri Deepak Doshi, Shri Shahbuddin Rathod and Shri H. N. Dastur



Shri Morari Bapu presenting the Sanmanapatra (citation) to Shri Ganshyam Desai, Advisor and former editor of *Navneet Samarpan*.

this is not a profit-making journal, we are committed to run it at any cost."

Shri Deepak Doshi, editor of the *Navneet Samarpan*, explained the role of an editor, saying: "The editing, too, is as joyful as the literary creative writing. The editor nurtures the writers. The writers create the literature and

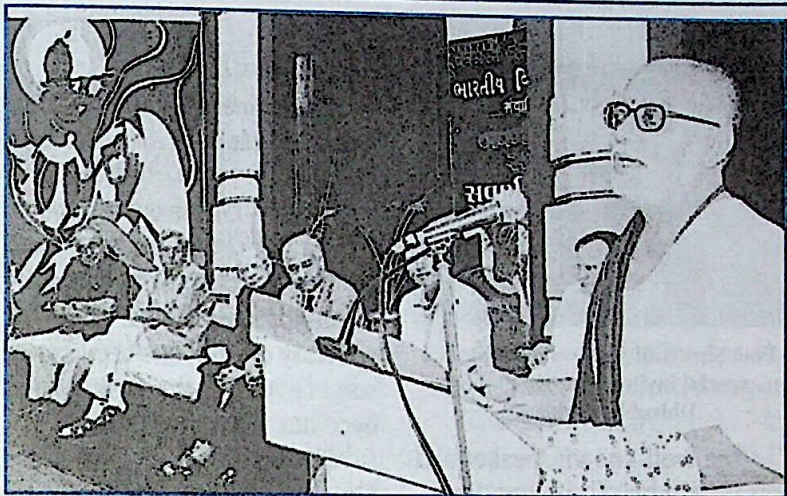
spoke on – Life, Literature and Culture respectively. The programme commenced with recitation of Vedic prayers, followed by the Sarva-Dharma-prayers presented by the Bhavan's A. H. Wadia School students.

The Bhavan's Vice-President, Justice Shri B. N. Srikrishna, welcomed the audience. Justice Srikrishna, who spoke few sentences in chaste Gujarati, drew spontaneous applause.

He stated:- "The *Navneet* (lit. butter) belongs to you, the readers; and ours is its *Samarpan* (lit. offering) (to you). Though

the literature moulds the society. With the journal, its editor too continues to be shaped (with time)."

The Bhavan's Executive Secretary, Shri H. N. Dastur, well-known Gujarati columnist, more widely known by his nickname, '*Kupamanduka*,' explained to the audience the Bhavan's multi-dimensional activities such as promoting of Sanskrit and Indian culture, dance, drama, computer learning, publication of books and journals in four languages. He announced that "to mark the completion of fifty years of



(From left to right) Shri H. N. Dastur, Shri Gunwant Shah, Dr. Suresh Dalal, Justice Shri B. N. Srikrishna, Shri Deepak Doshi, Shri Shahbuddin Rathod and Shri Morari Bapu

Navneet Samarpan, it has been decided to publish best selected writings from the issues of the *Navneet Samarpan*. The Gujarati poet, Shri Sitanshu Yashashchandra, will edit the selection of the poems, Shri Deepak Doshi will edit the selection of the best short stories, Shri Ramesh Oza will edit the selection of the best thoughtful articles, and the well-known artist Shri Atul Dodia will edit the selection of the best paintings appeared on the cover page of the *Navneet Samarpan*.”

Shri Dasturji also announced, “The Munshi Gold Medal and the cash prize of Rs. 51,000/- will be awarded, every year to the best literary composition published in the *Navneet Samarpan*. Further details regarding this will be published in the *Navneet Samarpan*.”

The eminent Gujarati short-story writer, Shri Ghanshyam Desai, who edited the *Navneet Samarpan* for many years, was felicitated. Shri Morari Bapu honoured him and presented him a Sanmanapatra (citation).



Poet Shri Anil Joshi welcoming the special invitee Smt. Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani.

The well-known speaker and essayist Shri Gunwant Shah, while speaking on 'Life', said: "The meaning of life will have to be found out from life itself. One who loses the respect for life cannot respect others. Life is full of anecdotes of honesty and dishonesty. Life flows endlessly between the two banks of the heart-stream and the brain-stream. Life needs both – the computer as well as the Yoga, as both are complementary to each other. Only heart or only intellect will not work today. This real understanding is developing in this 21st century."

Using the metaphor of the game of cricket, he explained the complexities of the modern

urban life.

The eminent Gujarati poet and eloquent orator, Dr. Suresh Dalal, speaking on 'Literature' expressed:- "That is the *Sahitya* (literature), which goes with *Sahita* (the people). It literally means joining together. For being a literary creator, one needs some sort of madness, then only the life becomes worth living."

Quoting profusely from the Gujarati poetic literature, he observed: "For being a creative writer, one necessarily needs to possess the special abilities like sensitivity, sensibility, observation, imagination and expression".

Revered Morari Bapu, reiterating the importance of "Culture", spoke on the ideal cultural centres of the life.



Poet Shri Anil Joshi felicitating, with bouquet, the donors Smt. Shaila Mehta and Shri Harish Mehta.

He elaborated, with examples, the concepts of the *Garbha-samskara* (importance of leading the life of self-restraint for noble progeny), the *Griha-samskara* (cultural household-atmosphere), the *Varga-samskara* (cultural discipline and noble education) and the *Dharma-samskara* (cultivation of noble virtues for peaceful co-existence and harmonious life).

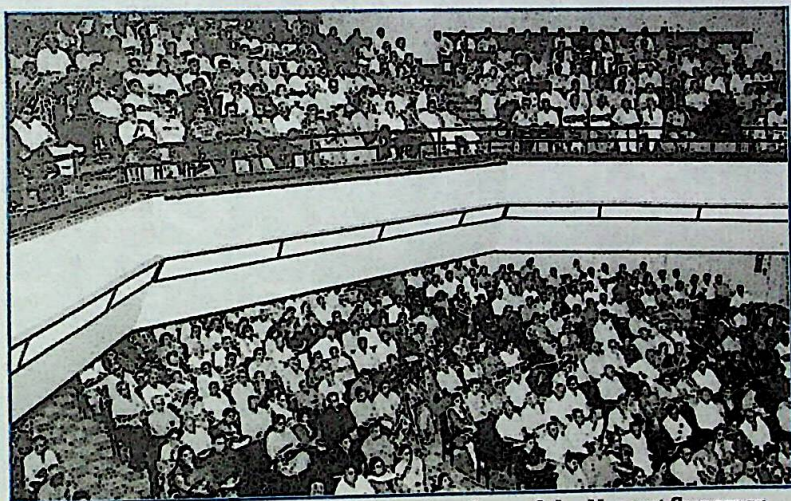
He also glorified the greatness of the mother, mother-tongue, *matri-samstha* (alma mater) and the motherland. Giving the example of the

Dashamsha-homa (sacrifice with the one-tenth part of the holy *mantras* that have been chanted), he appealed for organising five such functions for celebrating 50 years of the publication of the *Navneet Samarpan*.

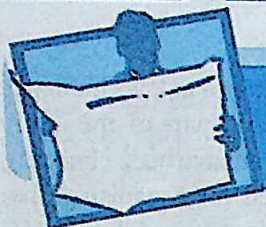
He also promised to arrange his Ramayana-Katha for the benefit to the Navneet Samarpan.

The well-known poet, Shri Suren Thakar 'Mehul', compered the programme.

Shri Shahbuddin Rathod presented the Hasya-darbar, a programme on humour, satire and wit. ■



The invitees and the Mumbai-based subscribers of the *Navneet Samarpan*.



Bhavan's News

U. K. Centre

London Mayor Visits Bhavan's UK Centre

The Mayor of London, Mr. Boris Johnson, visited the Bhavan Centre in West Kensington on October 31.

He was welcomed by the Bhavan's Chairman Mr. Maneck Dalal, OBE., Deputy High

Commissioner for India, Shri Asoke Mukerji, Mayor of Hammersmith and Fulham, Cllr Andrew Johnson, Leader of Hammersmith and Fulham Council, Mr. Stephen Greenhalgh and Mr. R. S. Suri



London Mayor Boris Johnson with dancers at Bhavan's London Kendra

were present on the occasion.

Mr. Maneck Dalal said that the Bhavan was much involved in the mainstream activities of London and the United Kingdom, especially in higher education, including the recent establishment of an Indian music degree course in collaboration with Trinity Laban and the University of Westminster.

The Deputy High Commissioner, Shri Asoke Mukerji, stated that the links between London and Indian cities were becoming stronger. Mr. Stephen Greenhalgh said the Borough of Hammersmith was proud to have the Bhavan within its boundaries.

Mr. Johnson referred to

Diwali and contrasting the festival of light with the present gloomy economic situation, related that he had that afternoon opened the mammoth Westfield Shopping Centre in Shepherd's Bush.

Although doubts had been expressed about opening such a Centre in the present financial climate, he, on the contrary, thought that this was the perfect time to have such a huge investment which would provide 7,000 jobs and new transport facilities to the area.

The evening ended with a short cultural programme of music and dance presented by the Bhavan's teachers and students.

Mumbai Head Quarters

Gita Jayanti Celebration

Gita Jayanti was celebrated on Tuesday, December 9, at the Central Bhavan, Mumbai. On this occasion the Vishnu-puja was performed, and the *Parayana* of the Vedic prayers,

Shrimad-Bhagavad-Gita and the Vishnu-sahasranama was recited by the staff-members and the students of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Ahmedabad Kendra

Gandhi's Message Retold

Darpana's 'Khadi Gaatha' began with a scene in which a group, wearing spotless khadi was seen keeping the tri-colour aloft with 'Vande Maataram', defied lathi blows and gunshots of the British police. Mallika, as the narrator, took viewers back to the Vedic times. Verses by

saint poets like Thiruvalluvar and Kabir ('*Jhini Jhini re chadariya*') were rendered.

Gandhiji wore simple clothes so that he could identify with the poor. With the spinning wheel, Gandhiji wished to awaken the idle masses to activity and give them the strength to bring Swaraj. The text, music, choreography and enactment evoked nationalism at its best.

Tirupati Kendra

Importance of Kartheeka

The Kendra conducted a discourse on the importance of the month Kartheeka in the Hindu calendar as part of its annual "*Kartheeka Gnanamrutham*".

Shri Chenchu Subbaiah, former Secretary, Dharma Prachara Parishad, T.T.D, the guest speaker, spoke about the importance of instilling spirituality in children at an early age. He said that once upon a time, the Hindu calendar began with this month. *Kartheeka Maasam* is for meditation, seeking one's inner self and

enlightening oneself at the Guru's feet.

According to Hindu mythology, Sri Maha Vishnu woke up from his "*Yoganidra*" of four months on *Dwadasi* day which is observed as "*Kshirabdi Dwadasi*". Tulasi and Amla plant are worshipped. Taking a dip in a nearby river, lighting a lamp, going on fast during the day are observed throughout the month. Dr. N. Satyanarayana Raju, Director, Bhavan's Tirupathi Kendra, Shri C. Srinivasan, Principal, Smt. K. Hymavathi, Vice-Principal, Shri A. Mohan, Shri N. K. Raja Rao, Bhavan's committee members, were present.

Kochi Kendra

All Kerala Bhavans' Youth Festival 2007-2008

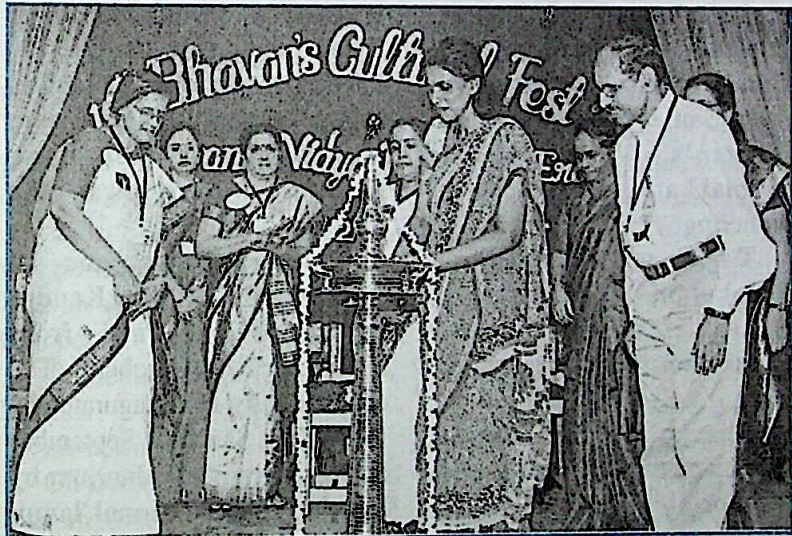
The Bhavan's Kochi Kendra hosted the 15th Bhavan's Cultural Fest on November 21 and 22 at Bhavan's Vidya Mandir, Eroor. Apart from 29 schools from Kerala, a school from Kodaikanal also participated. There were nearly 1800 participants, competing in 86 items. The two-day event was inaugurated by Smt. Sreelekha

IPS. There were 26 venues where the competitions were held simultaneously.

Bhavan's Adarsha Vidyalaya Kakkanad, emerged the overall champions for category I to IV and the host school, Bhavan's Vidya Mandir, Eroor clinched the trophy for categories I to IV.

Athletic Meet-2008

The 26th Dr. K. M. Munshi Memorial Inter School Athletic Meet was held on November 28 and 29, at Bhavan's Vidya Mandir, Eroor.



Smt. Sreelekha, IPS, lighting the traditional lamp



Navrathri programme

Smt. Jessy Joseph, Deputy Director of Education, Ernakulam declared the meet open. Smt. Jaya Jacob, Principal, Bhavan's Vidya Mandir, Elamakkara welcomed the gathering.

Twenty seven schools from Ernakulam and some of Bhavan's schools outside Ernakulam participated in the meet.

Bhavan's Vidya Mandir, Eroor won the Dr. K. M. Munshi Memorial Ever Rolling Championship Trophy while Bhavan's Vidya Mandir,

Elamakkara secured the first Runner up, and St. Peter Senior Secondary School the second Runner up. Shri C. Ramachandra Menon, Member, Managing Committee gave away the trophies to winners.

Cultural Programme

Bhavan's Kochi Kendra celebrated Navaratri from September 30 to October 9. The celebrations were inaugurated by Prof. M. K. Sanoo on September 30, at Bhavan's Auditorium by lighting the traditional lamp. This was followed by the Cultural programme "Natya



Manjusha” by Bhavan’s Vidya Mandir, Girinagar on September 30.

Bhavan’s Mahila Vibhag presented ‘*Ganesha Stuthy*’ and Bhavan’s Munshi Vidyashram presented “*NavadevaKoutham*” on October 1.

“*Nava Durgo Upasyamahai*” was presented by the students of Bhavan’s Adarsha Vidyalaya on October 2.

Students of Bhavan’s Bala Mandir, Kochi presented “*Nrithya Manjari*” on October 3.

On October 4, the children of Bhavan’s Newsprint Vidyalaya presented “*Natana Ghadamridham*” and Bala

Mandir presented “*Sreekrishna Stuthy*”. Bhavan’s Varuna Vidyalaya staged the programme “*Chilapathikaram*” a dance drama at Bhavan’s Auditorium.

Kannada Sangha, Cochin presented a variety entertainment programme by their members on October 5.

Bhavan’s Vidya Mandir, Elamakkara, staged “*Avathara Vaibhavam*” on October 6.

Bhavan’s Vidya Mandir, Eroor presented a dance drama “*Navasandhi Kautham*” on October 7. Rasikapriya presented a Vocal Concert on October 8, Vidyarambham on October 9.

Thrissur Kendra

National Press Day

Bhavan's college of Communication and Management, Thrissur, observed the "National Press Day" on November 16, by conducting a seminar on "Women in Media".

Shri N. P. Surendran, Chief Editor, Mathrubhumi spoke on the importance and introspection

of the media and where it is heading. He felt that media had lost its basic ethics and had been taken over by conglomerates to further their interests.

Two students presented a paper on the topic "Women in Media". Shri Devidas Warriar, Senior Media Person and Ms. Chitra Sankar, Course Director were also present.

Kolkata Kendra

Centre's Gesture



The Central Government sanctioned Rs. 79,135/- under the North-Eastern Rural Employment Generating Schemem for the development of the Kendra's school campus recently.

Seminar on 'Towards A Media-Controlled Regime'

Bhavan's two colleges of Communication and Management, ACCM at Bhowanipore and BCCM at Salt Lake conducted the seminar, "Towards a Media-Controlled Regime" on September 20, at Jadavpur University auditorium. Justice Shri Chittatosh Mookerjee, Chairman, Bhavan's Kolkata Kendra, said, "Our Constitution provided freedom of speech, expression and freedom of press but they should be conscious of these facts, realising their responsibilities, namely, transparency and accountability. Shri K. V. Gopalkrishnan, Director, Bhavan Kendra, delivered the welcome address and Md. Salim who was the guest of honour and Member

of Parliament, addressed the gathering.

The programme was followed by a keynote address by Shri Swapan Mullick, Director, Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute, who stated that newspapers should follow honesty and integrity holding up the highest values of life. He said that they should not be influenced by any other consideration and should present authentic news to the public.

There were three sessions – the first session was: "The Print Media – Crusaders or Cash Hunters?" The second session was: "The Electronic Media in search of TRP – a toy of the Rich People", and the concluding session was, "The Entertainment Media – Creativity or Commodity."

Wadakanchery Kendra

Bhavan's Cultural Festival

First Prize in Bharata Natyam was won by Navya Kishore of S. Ramakrishnan Memorial Public School. Other 12 students got prizes for different items.

The Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's S. Ramakrishnan Memorial Public School, Akamala, participated in the Bhavan's Cultural Festival 2008 held on November 21 and 22 at

Bhavan's Vidya Mandir, Eroor. Nineteen students accompanied by teachers contesting in 22 items got one first prize and 12 other prizes.

Children's Day Celebrated

As part of Children's Day celebrations, the students of S.



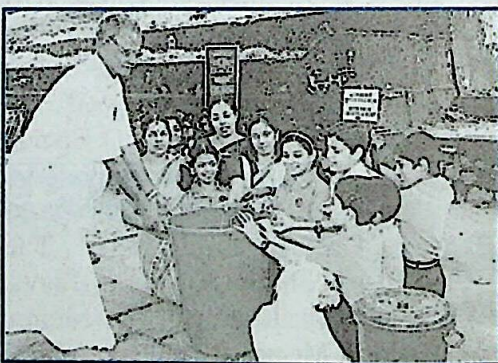
A view of students rally organised by Mullurkara Panchayat



S. Ramakrishnan Memorial Public School students at the rally.

painting competition conducted by the Lion's Club of Wadakanchery, on the same day under the scheme 'A hanful of rice, three sacks of rice collected from students were handed over to the Irunnilamkodu Temple for 'Annadanam'.

Ramakrishnan Memorial Public School, Akamala not only conducted function in the school but also participated in the Students' Rally at Mullurkara Centre organised by the Mullurkara Panchayat. The rally was a great success. The students also participated in



Sacks of rice being handed over to Irunnilamkodu Temple.

Hyderabad Kendra



Smt. M. Sri Durga receiving the award

Teachers' Award-2008

Smt. M. Sri Durga, Primary Teacher, Bhavan's Public School, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, was one of the four finalists of the 'Tata Consultancy Services - Education World Teachers Awards-2008'.

She was selected from 20,000

applications received by TCS EW. She was called for the final round at Lucknow and on November 18, she received an award of Rs. 10,000/- a certificate and a memento and a special commendation letter from the organisers at a glittering ceremony at the Taj Residency Hotel, Lucknow.



SIP-ABACUS National Arithmetic Prodigy-2008

J. Nilakanta Bhanu Prakash, Class - V student of the Bhavan's Public School, Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad, participated in SIP-ABACUS National Arithmetic Prodigy-2008 competition at Chennai and



J. Nilakanta Bhanu Prakash

secured third runnerup place in this national event. The competition was a test of diligence, intelligence, speed and accuracy.

Bharwari Kendra

Athletic Meet

The Bhavan's Mehta Vidyashram, Bharwari successfully organised Athletic Meet and Elocution and Geeta Shlokas Chanting Competition on November 7 & 8, 2008 under the guidance of Shri A. S. Verma, Education Officer of Northern and North Eastern Zone. Nine schools of Northern and North Eastern Region participated in these competitions.

Shri Nand Gopal Gupta *alias*

Nandi, Cabinet Minister of Stamp & Registration, Government of Uttar Pradesh was the Chief Guest.

Bhavan's Mehta Vidyashram, won the Boys Championship in Athletic Meet and was runner up in Elocution and Geeta Shlokas Chanting Competition.

Bhavan's Vidyalaya, Panchkula won the Girls Team Trophy in Athletic and Bhavan's K. D. Kanoria Vidyamandir, Renukoot, Sonebhadra was First in Elocution and Geeta Shlokas Chanting Competition.

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BHARATIYA VIDYA BHAVAN
Publication Division

K. M. Munshi Marg, Mumbai-400 007

Phones: 2363 1261/2363 4462, 2367 7547 Fax: 022-2363 0058

E-mail: bhavan@bhavan.org or bhavan@vsnl.net